A Study of School Improvement

Understanding the Processes and Outcomes of Planned Pedagogical Improvement in Independent Preparatory Schools

by

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Abstract

This thesis describes the processes and outcomes of planned pedagogical improvement in a group of independent preparatory schools. It is an ethnographic investigation of these schools, which were researched and reported as multiple composite case studies.

The research focuses upon two unusual and different aspects of school improvement. Firstly, a central theme of the study is the importance of the dynamic between improvement in classroom practice and the concomitant modification to school organisational arrangements. The case studies investigate the essence of the interactional processes that the schools experienced during implementing a process of pedagogical improvement, and as a result, a model is proposed to suggest a possible way of understanding the school improvement processes in these schools. Secondly, the research has been undertaken in the independent primary (preparatory) sector, where there has been little research undertaken and a dearth of literature that is useful and relevant to the culture of these schools specifically.

The thesis examines and analyses the constraints, problems and successes that the schools faced; and in particular considers individual and organisational capacity building, the stages that the teachers and schools moved through, the processes, consequences and outcomes and whether the pedagogical improvements could be sustained.

The writer presents an empirical model of the process and argues that the evidence could be related, in a meaningful way, to other independent preparatory schools.

The outcomes of the evidence appears to indicate that effective pedagogical improvement processes, that focus on modifying classroom practice and improving children's achievement, can be strategies for educational change; which can lead to adaptations and improvements within the organisational management arrangements, systems and controls within the school to support teaching and learning.

Abbreviations

GSA	Girls' Schools Association;
HMC	Headmasters and Headmistresses Conference;
IAPS	Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools;
ISI	Independent Schools Inspection
ISIS	Independent Schools Information Service;
K.	Headteacher of School 2.;
M.	Headteacher of School 1.;
M.	Headteacher of School 3.;
P.	Headteacher of School 4.
X.	Headteacher of School 5.
Y.	Headteacher of School 6.

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Overview of the Thesis

This research is concerned with the processes and outcomes of pedagogical improvement and the management of change in independent preparatory schools. The evidence was collected through multiple case studies over five years. In each case study convergent evidence was sought regarding the facts and conclusions for the case.

The specific purpose of this research is to examine a small group of independent preparatory schools holistically, i.e. by investigating the process of change, before, during and after an episode of planned pedagogical improvement; systematically, i.e. through a structured and focused case study approach over an extended period of time.

The research consists of an initial exploratory study and five in-depth case studies, which examine phases of development within six independent preparatory schools.

The research questions are:

- Why do preparatory schools feel impelled to move from the perceived relative stability to the relative instability of planned pedagogical improvement?
- Do these independent preparatory schools have the capacity to improve themselves?
- If so, what are the conditions and processes, which enable these independent preparatory schools to promote and sustain pedagogical improvement?
- Is it possible to develop a model to illustrate how the improvement process was sustained in some of these schools?
- Was the fact that these schools were independent relevant, and if so, in what way?

The structure of the thesis

Chapter 1 (the introduction) explains the study's origins, provides an overview of the research questions and methods, and describes the context and intentions of the research, which is intended to be exploratory and illuminative. Due to the limited contemporary literature and academic knowledge about independent preparatory schools, there is also a brief historical background to provide a rich contextual basis to the research. Raising levels of academic achievement must ultimately be related to the quality of the classroom experience encountered by children throughout the school, therefore the research examines whether it is possible for schools to improve the quality of teaching and learning at both a classroom and whole school level in order to improve standards of pupil achievement. Therefore, this chapter also contains a definition of pedagogy and an introduction to the literature (the work of Barth, Hopkins and Harris) which are the main theoretical strands that provide the theoretical framework.

Chapter 2 (the review of literature) offers an overview of the literature concerning pedagogical and school improvement. It considers the research and writing of those who have investigated the human element and complexities of planned pedagogical and school improvement processes. I have particularly used the work of Barth, Harris and Hopkins as the theoretical framework to structure my reading and the exploratory process encountered during data collection, analysis and interpretation. I made this decision for a range of reasons, which are explained below.

Firstly, I intend to focus on how independent preparatory schools raise the standards of children's achievement by improving the teaching and learning processes and the conditions that support this. Each of the case study schools believed

that by improving teachers' knowledge, skills and understanding through a period of professional development, that this would improve teaching methods and children's learning. It appeared to me (as an observer) that the schools made an assumption, and that this assumption was that if they improved the skills and knowledge of the teachers, they would also be able to improve the standards of pupil achievement. This is similar to the arguments made by Barth (1990) who discusses the need for basing school reform on the skills, aspirations and energy of those closest to the school: teachers, senior management, governors and parents. He believes that school improvement is based on a set of assumptions:

- Schools have the capacity to improve themselves, if the conditions are right;
- When the need and purpose is there, when the conditions are right, adults and students alike learn and each energises and contributes to the learning of the other;
- What needs to be improved about schools is their culture, the quality of interpersonal relationships, and the nature and quality of learning experiences;
- School improvement is an effort to determine and provide, from without and within, conditions under which the adults and youngsters who inhabit schools will promote and sustain learning among them. (Barth, 1990).

Secondly, Hopkins (2001) believes that effective school improvement is a strategy for educational change, that focuses on children's achievement, by modifying classroom practice and adapting the management arrangements within the school, in order to support teaching and learning. As I was interested in analysing the conditions and processes for pedagogical improvement in these schools, Hopkins' work provided one of the theoretical strands that underpins the investigation. I also wished to ascertain whether, and if so, how these independent preparatory schools could harness the energy and processes of educational change.

Thirdly, independent school leaders often work within very constrained contexts as

they find themselves caught between the innate conservatism of many staff and the views of other stakeholders, such as parents and governors, about how to improve their school. The headteachers in the case studies recognised the need to challenge many of the established norms within their schools. One of the main beliefs they wanted to challenge was who were the 'leaders' in their school. They wanted to establish a much broader approach to leadership in which all members of staff felt able to take on a leadership role. This, therefore, guided me in selecting the third strand of literature within the analytical framework, and this was the work of Harris.

Harris (2002) has examined the development, implementation and impact of a 'distributed' approach to leadership. The main challenge to these schools was how to develop a new set of cultural norms around leadership, based around less hierarchical approaches, rather than just delegating leadership responsibility in line with an existing hierarchical model existing in many independent schools.

The thinking of Barth (1990), Hopkins (2001) and Harris (2002) are the main theoretical strands that provide the theoretical framework for this thesis and the conceptual lens through which I have investigated the school in this study.

The purpose of the literature review is to explore the existing knowledge, understanding and models that are available in interpreting the findings from this study. The literature review is in four sections.

The first section examines the school improvement research literature and the second section addresses some of the problems with the 'authentic' (Hopkins, 2001) school improvement paradigm. The third section focuses upon planned improvement processes and the final section looks at some of the complexities of pedagogical

improvement, including the strategies that the literature suggests could be critical for successful planned change and improvement.

Chapter 3 (the research methodology) is where I present the detail of the research design and the methods employed in the multiple case study. I describe how the research was conducted and then examine the issues of reliability and validity.

The chapter is divided into five sections. The first section focuses upon the background to ethnography, case study and educational enquiry; in this section I explain my understanding of ethnographic enquiry to make explicit the assumptions upon which this research is based. The second section examines the design of the research, the propositions of the study and the research questions. The third section looks in detail at how I conducted the research, and is split in six sub-sections, which deal with the exploratory study, access and entry; field work; recording data; data analysis and writing. The fourth section examines issues related to reliability and validity; and the fifth section highlights issues related to reflections on my own learning.

I do not seek to generalise to all independent preparatory schools or primary schools nationally. Rather I wish to examine a group of independent preparatory schools in order to explore, and, perhaps, examine the issues to the relatability of these schools' experiences of pedagogical improvement, school improvement, and the management of change.

I therefore needed to choose a methodology which would assist me in the process of exploring and improving my own and others' understanding and practice. My research is grounded in reflection of what is happening in this small group of schools.

My role is that of a participant in my enquiry. The research does not take place on what Schon (1983:43) describes as the "high, hard ground" but in the swampy lowlands of others' practice. Thus positivist approaches involving the use of controlled experimentation and testing and concentrating on quantitative data are not appropriate. My intention is not to develop hypotheses, either about an observed reality nor to generate conclusions which could be generalised to other contexts, but to gain insights and understanding concerning the practice that I observe. Although the research is not generalisable in the positivist sense, it perhaps has applicability and could be relatable to other contexts.

Chapter 4 (the case studies) is sub-divided into six sections and contains the summary reports of the evidence from the exploratory study and the five case studies. The purpose of the exploratory study is to ascertain whether and why independent preparatory schools embark upon significant pedagogical improvement and to investigate the external and internal factors and influences that are critical in shaping and forming the decisions these schools make.

The first four case studies examine, analyse and conceptualise the essence of the interactional processes that four of the independent preparatory schools experience before, during and after implementing a planned pedagogical improvement process. Each case study examines one school over a period of time.

The fifth case study considers the planned pedagogical improvement process in two further schools. The purpose of this final case study was to investigate and verify the relatability of the evidence that emerges from the first four case studies. Each case study is a whole study.

Chapter 5 (the discussion of the findings) examines the findings of the case studies and discusses whether schools have the capacity to improve themselves, the stages that they move through and the conditions that are needed for this process to occur. It also considers the effects and consequences for children, teachers and the schools. In this chapter, the discussion is structured on Barth's (1990) assumptions about improvement. The reason for following this course of action is because Barth's statements generally subsume the study's research questions (that are contained in chapter 3, the methodology) and these assumptions have enabled me to describe and analyse the processes that occurred.

Chapter 6 (the conclusions) summarises and presents the main findings arising out of the research, highlights the major outcomes and offers some recommendations. It attempts to answer each of the research questions and contains a section on issues derived from the conclusions that have led to further reflection and consideration. The conclusions examine whether the fact that these schools were independent was a factor in the findings from the research and considers whether this could have had an affect on the process itself. It also considers issues of sustainability in pedagogical improvement and processes and outcomes that may be relatable to other schools. The possible steps and stages are described in a simple theoretical methodical. Finally, it considers what I have learned and offers personal reflections on the process of undertaking this study.

Understanding the Processes and Outcomes of Planned Pedagogical Improvement in Independent Preparatory Schools

Chapter 1: Introduction

This research is concerned with the processes and outcomes of pedagogical improvement and the management of change in independent preparatory schools.

For the purposes of this thesis, effective school improvement is defined as a 'strategy for educational change that focuses on children's achievement by modifying classroom practice and adapting the management arrangements within the school to support teaching and learning'. (Hopkins, 2001:22).

Therefore, the specific purpose of this research is to examine a small group of independent schools holistically; i.e. by investigating the processes of change, before, during and after an episode of planned pedagogical improvement; systematically, i.e. through a structured and focused case study approach over an extended period of time.

The study was undertaken over a five year period and during the data collection, analysis and interpretation I have attempted to reflect, uncover and make explicit tacit and hidden assumptions and intentions about the processes that the schools were experiencing during a period of change.

The research consists of an initial exploratory study and five in-depth case studies, which examine phases of development within six independent preparatory schools.

- The exploratory study was undertaken to establish why independent preparatory schools feel impelled to move from perceived relative stability to the relative instability of planned change. It was also intended that the exploratory study

would inform the design of the case study approach and of the research methodology;

- The first four case studies examine four of the schools during three phases of the development process: before, during and after;

- The fifth case study examines two other independent preparatory schools to ascertain if the processes and outcomes that occurred in the first four schools could be validated and whether their experiences could be considered as relatable to other schools in the independent sector.

The research was intended to be exploratory and illuminative, rather than generalising and testing theory.

The purpose of the research and the thesis is to explore the process of change in a small group of independent preparatory schools as they moved through a series of phases of pedagogical improvement. I wanted to examine and analyse the process of change in the independent sector.

As I entered in to the life of these schools, I questioned and observed the subjects but also questioned my own thinking and understanding based on my reading. I have particularly used the work of Barth, Harris and Hopkins as a framework to structure my thinking and the exploratory process encountered during data collection, analysis and interpretation. The decision to structure my thinking in this way is explained below:

Firstly, I intend to focus my research on how independent preparatory schools raise the standards of children's achievement by improving the teaching and learning processes and the conditions that support this. It appeared to me (as an observer) that each of the case study schools made an assumption, and that this assumption was that if they improved the skills and knowledge of the teachers, they would also be able to improve the standards of pupil achievement. This is similar to the arguments made by

Barth (1990) who discusses the need for basing school reform on the skills, aspirations and energy of those closest to the school: teachers, senior management, governors and parents. He believes that school improvement is based on a set of assumptions:

- Schools have the capacity to improve themselves, if the conditions are right;
- When the need and purpose is there, when the conditions are right, adults and students alike learn and each energises and contributes to the learning of the other;
- What needs to be improved about schools is their culture, the quality of interpersonal relationships, and the nature and quality of learning experiences;
- School improvement is an effort to determine and provide, from without and within, conditions under which the adults and youngsters who inhabit schools will promote and sustain learning among them. (Barth, 1990:46).

Secondly, Hopkins (2001) believes that effective school improvement is a strategy for educational change, that focuses on children's achievement, by modifying classroom practice and adapting the management arrangements within the school, in order to support teaching and learning. As I was interested in analysing the conditions and processes for pedagogical improvement in these schools, this provided the concept that underpinned the investigation. I also wished to ascertain if this, in turn, could provide the opportunity to harness the energy and processes of educational change in independent schools.

Thirdly, independent school leaders often work within very constrained contexts as they find themselves caught between the innate conservatism of many staff and the views of other stakeholders, such as parents and governors, about how to improve their school. The headteachers in the case studies recognised the need to challenge many of the established norms within their schools. One of the main beliefs they wanted to challenge was who were the 'leaders' in their school. They wanted to

establish a much broader approach to leadership in which all members of staff felt able to take on a leadership role. This therefore, guided me in selecting the third strand of literature within the analytical framework, and this was the work of Harris.

Harris (2002) has examined the development, implementation and impact of a 'distributed' approach to leadership. The main challenge to these schools was how to develop a new set of cultural norms about leadership, based around less hierarchical approaches, rather than just delegating leadership responsibility in line with an existing hierarchical model existing in many independent schools.

The thinking of Barth (1990), Hopkins (2001) and Harris (2002) are the main theoretical strands that provide the conceptual framework for this thesis and the conceptual lens through which I have investigated the schools in the study, combined with the thinking tools needed to explain (Jenkins 1992:17). The research attempts to describe and analyse the process that occurred in a small number of schools, in order to understand it better and to add to existing knowledge about pedagogical improvement in the independent sector.

What is Pedagogy?

This research is focused on understanding the processes and outcomes of planned pedagogical improvement in independent preparatory schools, and therefore a definition of pedagogy is important. Watkins and Mortimer (1999:62) defined pedagogy as "any conscious activity by one person, designed to enhance the learning of another." However, I contend that this is a definition of teaching, rather than pedagogy.

My definition of teaching is:

That teaching in any setting, is the act of using method to enable pupils to learn.

As Alexander said, (2000:127):

> Teaching methods mean tasks, activities, interactions and judgements; plus teaching takes place in a setting, which means that teaching demands structure and form. It is also affected by time, space and patterns of pupil organisation.

Pedagogy is much wider and deeper than teaching, as it contains all of the elements of teaching as defined above, but it also contains the contingent discourses about the character of culture, the purpose of education, the nature of childhood and learning and the structure of knowledge. Therefore, as I contend that teaching is an act, **my definition of pedagogy is that:**

Pedagogy is both an act and a discourse.

These pedagogical discourses bear on and are manifested in the various aspects of teaching and are mediated through all aspects of the life of a school. Therefore, this definition of pedagogy is important as a basis for the research, as it prompted me to look at the dynamics of schools and classrooms in terms of teaching and learning as part of a pedagogical discourse, rather than just on a narrow focus of a discrete teaching activity.

Why investigate independent schools?

Independent schools have been experiencing a 'quiet' revolution during the last fifteen years, where changes have occurred in the curriculum, assessment processes, employment, and deployment of staff and in pedagogical issues. However, this is also a group of schools where there is little published or unpublished systematic data.

There have been a number of descriptive accounts of Public Schools (senior or secondary schools) by past or present headteachers, teachers and pupils, some

sociological studies which offer insights into life within these educational communities, (Barford, 1967 and Wakefield, 1963) and some historical studies (Simon 1966, Blyth, 1967, Walford, 1984) plus the Public Schools Commission report (Newsome, 1968) however, there has been no contemporary examination of change or development in preparatory schools.

Eton, Winchester and St Paul's – these grand schools are instantly recognisable as the brand leaders of the private education sector in the United Kingdom. Yet there have been changes and improvements that have been made within the preparatory schools, in terms of the capacity building of their staff and the links between classroom improvement and school improvement, which, for the most part, have remained hidden from the public and professional eye.

There are more than 500 preparatory schools, which, although lacking the national profile of the great public schools, are proving to be the surprise success of a private education system operating under a Labour administration. In a survey, published by the Independent Schools Information Service (1999) the traditional public schools, represented by the Headmasters and Headmistresses Conference (HMC) reported that pupil numbers fell by 1,261 to 166,607, a 0.18% drop since 1998. By contrast the preparatory schools, represented by the Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools (IAPS) reported that pupil numbers rose by 3,3395 to 123,981 – 2.8% increase over the same period.

The results of large-scale and small-scale projects and research into school and pedagogical improvement in the maintained sector have yielded invaluable insights and greater knowledge, understanding and precision about what makes some schools more effective than others and whether school improvement can overcome the effects

of disadvantage. (Mortimer and Whitty, 1997; Gray and Wilcox, 1996).

MacGilchrist et al., (1997) showed that schools could become intelligent organisations by the way they made use of the now substantial body of knowledge, ideas and experience on improvement and effectiveness. The work of Hopkins (2001:47) proved to be the foundation for this piece of small-scale research, as he set out the essential principles that underpin 'real' school improvement. He talked of:

> "Schools and those who live out their daily lives within them, are no longer the 'victims' of change, but have become managers of the change process."

Studies into school improvement and the management of change have naturally focused upon the maintained sector; however, a study into what has been occurring within the independent sector may be able to add another layer of information to existing knowledge. This study attempts to examine what the process of pedagogical improvement and school change looks like in practice and how it was achieved in a small group of independent preparatory schools.

Historical context

Independent schools today have their origins in the grammar schools of the Middle Ages (which for these purposes, means before 1485 AD) and, later, in the public schools. In 1382, when William of Wykeham founded Winchester College, there were already some 400 grammar schools, most of them under the control of monasteries, cathedrals, guilds or chantries. Many of the poor boys that attended them were destined to become clerks or priests, since the Church was the career easily open to them. Daughters of the gentry would receive a short training in their own homes in religion, reading and writing from a governess or from their own mother. The earliest recorded reference to a public school *(publicae scolae)* was written, probably by

Abbott Samson of Bury, who in 1180 wrote of King Canute (1017 – 1035)

> :…he established public schools in the cities and towns, appointing masters to them and sending to them to be taught well-born boys of good promise and also freed the sons of slaves meeting the expense from the royal purse.

The expression *publicae scolae* was also used in a letter of 1364 written by the Bishop of Winchester and later in 1437 in a document referring to the Cathedral Grammar School of Lincoln. It seems that *publicae scolae* was used at that time to denote state schools in contrast to private establishments or private tuition.

Official concern about the public schools was recorded in parliament in 1820 when Lord Broughton unsuccessfully sponsored a Parliamentary bill whose object was to bring about some exercise of control over them. This was followed by three parliamentary commission, the most famous of which was the Taunton Commission which reported in 1868 and recommended the setting up of a system of State education with local control.

Girl's schools were founded on the lines of boys' public schools and in the post-war years from 1945 under strong leadership from within, coupled with support from their professional associations, the girls' schools forged ahead, making up much of the leeway caused by the legal disadvantage and institutional neglect of earlier decades.

The system of national, state or maintained schools that did not charge fees to the parents, has its origins in the decade from 1860 to 1870, although the system as such did not emerge until after 1902, and it only became a national maintained system under the Butler Education Act of 1944.

Section 70 of the Education Act 1944 established the expression 'independent school' as meaning, broadly a school that was entitled to charge fees and would be

independent of State control. Section 463 of the Education Act 1996 defines an independent school as one at which full-time education is provided for five or more pupils of compulsory school age, not being a school maintained by a local education authority, although these schools must be registered with the government and regularly inspected. Preparatory schools are the primary age range of independent schools and usually cater for children from the foundation stage to the end of key stage two or three. Independent schools of today are very different places from those of 600 years ago. But, despite the body of legislation that entrenches their right of existence and their right to charitable status, they are inevitably affected by the market of changing values and expectations of society and parents in general, and educational legislation and professional expectations in particular.

Context and intent of the research

This thesis consists of an exploratory study and five case studies, which investigate the processes of change experienced by independent preparatory schools when introducing new approaches to learning and teaching.

The exploratory study examines why independent preparatory schools feel impelled to move from perceived relative stability to the instability of planned improvement. The first four case studies attempt to examine, conceptualise and theorise about the four schools' methods for addressing a particular problem or set of problems and the impact of this on teachers and children at each phase of development: before, during and after the improvement process. The fifth case study attempts to validate and relate the findings of the previous investigations to the experiences of two other independent schools, which have experienced similar improvement processes.

To fully understand the context, in which these schools were operating, a little background is necessary. The school communities, where the research was undertaken, are located on the outer fringes of London. (Appendices 3.1 and 3.2 provide a brief summary on the background of these schools.) Each of the schools were perceived to be thriving successful schools by the parents and local community.

Before commencing the case studies, two sources of evidence provided a framework for the research. The prime source, was understanding gained from a comprehensive review of the current related theory and research. The second source was the exploratory study. The findings and themes emerging from the exploratory study informed the formulation of the research questions and the design of the research methodology.

The research questions

- Why do preparatory schools feel impelled to move from perceived relative stability to relative instability of planned pedagogical improvement?

- Do these independent preparatory schools have the capacity to improve themselves?

- If so, what are the conditions and processes, which enable these independent preparatory schools to promote and sustain pedagogical improvement?

- Is it possible to develop a model to illustrate how the improvement process was sustained in some of these schools?

- Was the fact that these schools are independent, relevant, and if so, in what way?

The above questions are to be addressed through a multiple case study which will examine the processes of pedagogical improvement. When conducting multiple case study, it is important to develop a theoretical framework. The framework needs to state the conditions under which a particular phenomenon is likely to be found (a literal replication). and which could become the vehicle for generalising emerging

evidence. The exploratory study was carried out in order to 'bound' the case studies on three levels:

First boundary: deciding on the time line for each case;

Second boundary: deciding on the people and schools to be involved in each case;

Third boundary: developing aspects of personal theory and meanings for each case. .

This process of bounding the first four case studies then lead to the final study which examined similarities and differences in the experiences of two other schools that had undergone a pedagogical improvement process and to allow a thematic analysis, in order to look for hierarchical constructs. Bassey, (1999), says that: "an important criteria for judging the merit of a case study is the extent to which the details are sufficient and appropriate for a teacher working in a similar situation to relate his/her decision-making to, that described in the case study. The relatability is more important than its generalisability."

The research theory underpinning this study is that exploratory and illuminative investigations are an approach to building educational theory or adding to existing knowledge, by encapsulating the claims to educational knowledge of qualitative empirical research.

Further, the issue of relatability replaces the certainty of a scientific generalisation by the uncertainty of statements that contain qualifiers. I acknowledge that data that is relatable could have littler credence; however, I believe that when this data is supported by a research account which makes clear the context of the statement and the justifying evidence, it provides an account that could be relevant and useful to practitioners. Evidence that is relatable invites replication and this, by leading to

augmentation and modification of the emerging data, contributes powerfully to the edifice of educational theory.

The discussion chapter will indicate the extent of the replication logic and why certain cases had certain results, whereas other cases had contradictory results. As has been said in the paragraph above, it is believed that the outcomes may add to existing knowledge, could be illuminative and useful to researchers and practitioners, as the findings are relatable to the experience of other independent schools.

This chapter has discussed the origins of the study; described the context and intent of the research and provided an overview of the research questions and methods. The next chapter, which is the review of literature, will examine a range of literature concerned with school improvement, teaching, learning and pedagogy. The purpose is to develop the knowledge that was gained during the exploratory study (see chapter 4) and to explore existing models, knowledge and understanding that are available.

Understanding the Process and Outcomes of Planned Pedagogical Improvement in Independent Preparatory Schools

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Introduction

In order to begin to undertake this study into the school improvement process in independent preparatory schools, I reviewed a range of literature concerned with school improvement, teaching, learning and pedagogy. The purpose was to explore existing theoretical models, knowledge and understanding, in order to provide a theoretical framework which would support the eventual interpretation of the findings from my research. The problems, controversies and deficiencies in the literature are used to contextualise and ground the study.

The research into school improvement and the management of change affords a prominent place in this review of literature. The appeal of school improvement research undoubtedly lies in its promise of simple solutions to complex problems. The argument I wish to develop is that the school improvement research does indeed have the potential to be useful to practitioners concerned with improving the quality of education, however, unless it is informed by an awareness of both the macro and micro contexts of schools, the research is likely to be intellectually bland and of little practical use. One of the essential elements in the macro context, is social class. In the micro context, the problem is a neglect of how teachers themselves make sense of the world of the classroom, and the importance of that in any improvement strategy to bring about change and development.

This literature review is in four main sections. The first section examines the school improvement research literature and the second section addresses some of the problems with the 'authentic' (Hopkins, 2001:12) school improvement paradigm.

> It is a combination of elements of both traditions into a new paradigm, in which mixed methods rather than either quantitative or qualitative ones are utilised for description and explanation and in which the improvement of schools is to be through 'pulling levers' selected from both former traditions. (See for example Gray, et al., 1999.) (Hopkins, 2001:63)

The third section focuses upon planned improvement processes and the final section looks at some of the complexities of pedagogical improvement, including the strategies that the literature suggests could be critical for successful planned change and improvement.

School improvement research literature

This section will examine the development of school improvement thinking and research over time, and considers the literature that specifically underpins this study.

> The growth of interest in school improvement has been striking. In less than a decade, school improvement has become an expectation of all schools across many Western countries. In the UK, as in many other educational systems, school improvement has become a dominant theme in contemporary educational reform and development. (Harris, 2002:14)

School improvement research is focused on the centrality of improving the standards of teaching and learning. Much of the literature reiterates the importance of multi-level intervention and of mobilising change at school, departmental and classroom levels. (Fullan, 1992; Hopkins et al., 1994; Hopkins and Harris, 1997; and Hopkins, 2001).

School improvement relies on the capacity of a school to manage change and development. As Hopkins, suggests,

> Real improvement is best regarded as a strategy for educational change that focuses on student achievement by modifying classroom practice and adapting the management arrangements within the school to support teaching and learning. (Hopkins, 2001:36)

The school improvement approach to educational change embodies the long-term goal of moving towards the ideal type of the self-renewing schools and this approach rests on a number of assumptions (van Velzen *et al.*, 1985; Hopkins, 1987, 1990). These are that:-

- the school is the centre of change;
- there is a systematic approach to change;
- the "internal" conditions of schools are a key focus for change;
- educational goals are accomplished more effectively;
- there is a multi-level perspective;
- implementation strategies are integrated;
- there is a drive toward institutionalisation.

A more recent definition of school improvement is that it is an " approach to educational change that enhances student outcomes as well as strengthening the schools' capacity." (Hopkins *et al.*, 1994:72) This definition focuses upon the process of school improvement rather than the outcomes at the expense of the process. At the centre of this definition appear to be a number of constituent factors and these are often presented as key characteristics for successful improvement and development. (Leithwood, 1995; Louis and Kruse, 1995; Hopkins *et al.*, 1994). These are characteristics are often grouped under the headings of vision, planning and learning.

<u>The literature that underpins this study</u>

There are many definitions of school improvement. Miles, *et al.* (1987:17) defined school improvement as,

> The systematic, sustained effort aimed at change in learning conditions and other related internal conditions in one or more schools with the ultimate aim of accomplishing educational goals more effectively.

Van Velzen *et al.* (1985:34) said that school improvement was a:

> ……systematic, sustained effort aimed at change in learning conditions and other related internal conditions in one or more schools.

Hopkins (1996) offers two ideas for school improvement: the first is related to general efforts to improve things for students and to make schools better places where they can learn more effectively; and the second defines school improvement as "a strategy for educational improvement that enhances student outcomes as well as strengthening the school's capacity for the management of change."

It is the second definition, which highlights the importance of improvement as a process for changing the culture of the school and focuses on the school and teachers as an essential part of the process, which underpins the research in this study. The core belief is that for school improvement to be effective, teachers have to be involved in the process at a number of levels and that the focus of the task is to change the culture of the school and not just the structures and the superficial working practices.

Chapter one explained the theoretical framework for this thesis, which provides a conceptual lens. This was necessary as understanding change requires a sociological interrogation of practice in order to describe and understand the complex motivations of individuals and the schools they inhabit. However, in using the critical orientation model proposed by Hopkins (2001), I am clearly on dangerous ground, as it could be assumed that I am engaged in an adulation of values and process orientation (Fidler, 2001:42).

However, engaging with theory through critical and reflective thinking based on a conceptual framework is the means by which I, like others, can stand outside such attempts in order to be objective. The critical focus of this study is on reflection and understanding, as reflection uncovers and makes explicit tacit and hidden assumptions and intentions.

> School improvement strategies within this orientation are 'authentic' and emphasise student learning as well as achievement, intervention and capacity building. (Hopkins, 2001: 11)

Barth (1990:91) argued that, "what needs to be improved about schools is their culture, the quality of inter-personal relationships and the nature and quality of learning experiences." This assumption emphasises that the process of school development is concerned with creating and managing the internal conditions within the school that will enable and support the improvement process. Given this, it is important to define culture.

The cultural perspective

Hoyle (1986:17) argues that values are central to the concept of culture and that by contrast, climate focuses upon the quality of relationships between members of an organisation. Questions are asked about whether the culture of an organisation can be viewed holistically, how it can be identified and the extent to which it can be managed and changed. Schein's definition is that culture is:

> A pattern of basic assumptions – invested, discovered or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and integration – that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore has to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems. (Schein, 1985: 61)

Mitroff and Pauchant (1988:12) suggested that culture is to the organisation as personality is to the individual. Deal and Kennedy (1985:35) described it as 'the way we

do things around here'. Most models of culture (see for example, Schein 1985; Pauchant and Mitroff, 1989; Hofstede, 1994; Williams et al., 1993) agree that it may be thought of as combining a number of distinct layers, including individual beliefs and assumptions, coming together in the form of shared values and operating norms and ultimately, consistent patterns of behaviour. Bush (1998:61) noted that:

> Every organisation has a formally instituted pattern of authority and an official body of rules and procedures which are intended to aid the achievement of those goals. However, alongside these formal aspects of the organisation are networks of informal relationships and unofficial norms which arise from the interaction of individuals and groups working within the formal structure.

The importance of culture was recognised by Hofstede (1994:42) who asserted that it had achieved a status similar to that of structure in organisational studies. As Bush (1998:67) concluded, culture and strategy are closely related:

> First, both are underpinned by values, leading to a clear vision, the future of the school or college……Secondly, culture is an important dimension of the context in which strategy operates….Thirdly, culture need not be unitary, as long as the subcultures do not come into direct conflict….recognition of the value of alternative cultures may enrich the organisation.

Understanding the informal processes is clearly vital to managing the strategy process, yet many authors agree that cultural change is complex, difficult and can only be achieved in the long term, as it takes time to develop people's beliefs and attitudes. It is thus important to gain some insight into the nature of culture within a particular organisation.

Bush (1998:33), when reviewing research into the concept of culture in schools, reported that a number of different sub-cultures may exist within a school and that there may be difficulties in relationships with other groups whose behavioural norms are different. Wallace and Hall (1994:132) reported that senior management teams provide one example of a sub-group with a strong internal culture which often had weak connections

to other groups.

Therefore, the literature appears to suggest that achieving desired cultural change is a difficult and lengthy process. Kotter and Schlesinger (1979) advocated the use of education, communication and participation, elements reflected in the approaches recommended by Turner (1990) and Gorridge (1994). These included the development of a clear purpose or vision, communication of this and a published action plan; supporting and guiding people to build confidence, beginning with people in key positions (opinion formers) and finally by providing effective leadership.

However, to talk about the cultural perspective in schools is not easy, despite the work of Evers and Lakomski (1991), Nias *et al*. (1989), Sergiovanni and Corbally (1984), Westoby (1988) and Fullan and Hargreaves (1991). Some writers such as Sergiovanni, (1984) and Firestone and Wilson (1989) have advocated that leaders should strive to shape the values and norms of the schools they lead. In other words, the values and beliefs of the school are subordinated to the headteacher's preferences. Moreover, Beare *et al*. (1989), Hargreaves and Hopkins (1991) and Fullan (1991) stress that successful management becomes a matter of getting the culture right.

The difficulty with these different perspectives is that culture can be seen as a means of control, whether by manipulative or strong leaders or whether by groups within a school, who use the culture as a way of resisting change and development. Within the school improvement literature, the school is viewed as an organic and dynamic culture and an essential assumption is that improvement strategies can result in changing the culture.

Research (Gray, *et al*. 1999) has shown that ineffective schools have particular cultures that are characterised by dysfunctional staff relationships and an insufficient focus on improving teaching and learning. Work by Rosenhollz (1989); Stoll and Fink (1996) and Hopkins (2001) have demonstrated how different types of school culture affect the possibility and practicability of school level improvement. Hargreaves (1994) argues that the ideal culture for an improving school is one which balances academic pressure and social cohesion.

There is one final aspect of culture that it is important to address. The school improvement literature places a great emphasis on the need for the effective or improving school to develop a collegial approach amongst the staff. Although, in principle, I am in complete agreement philosophically, the practical issue of this principle has ramifications for the independent schools which are the focus of this study.

Brundrett (1998) described the spread of the idea of collegiality and whole staff involvement within the United Kingdom and internationally. He raised several philosophical and practical difficulties for achieving collegiality, particularly in larger schools and independent schools, including the need for consensus, differences in experience and expertise, the danger of micro-political forces and the spread of 'stakeholder constituencies'. He noted the added problem of working in a highly centralised and directed environment, and that this is further compounded in many independent schools, where they are not constrained by curriculum legislation.

The schools involved in this study have traditionally and historically had

a cultural presumption that each teacher would have high expectations of children and that the standards of learning would be correspondingly high. However, despite this, there was no emphasis, belief or requirement for teachers to be collegial or to have collegiate working relationships. It is against this historical background that the headteachers of these independent schools have struggled, and why one of the strategies used in all of the schools (involved in this study), was to develop teachers' capacity through improving their knowledge and understanding of pedagogy. This strategy had unplanned and unforeseen ramifications for the schools as it coincidentally provided a context for identifying, discussing and realigning values, beliefs and attitudes.

Problems with the school improvement paradigm

This section will consider the criticisms of the school improvement paradigm. The latter part of the section will refer to the relevance of the literature in the light of the background of the schools involved in this research project.

There has been criticism of some of the school improvement research and literature. This criticism has been directed at five aspects of the school improvement research focus. The first concern is that school improvement leads to "an inattention to an improvement of outcomes" (Bottery, 2001:67). Without an attempt to measure the impact of changes in improvement programmes upon student outcomes, there can be little genuine progress towards improving the learning experience of students.

The second is that the focus on action and development leads to the neglect of distance, objectivity and reflectivity. By this, he was referring to the fact that the means of

implementing school improvement could become more important and valued than the actual ends or outcomes. Also, there is a concern that 'unreflective action' can be unproductive.

The third concern is that the focus on school ownership can all too easily lead to a disparagement of insights or expertise which are not generated or located within the school context. Bottery argued that although the internal context is important, it is also crucial to involve external agents or agencies that can provide a comparative focus of critical overview.

The fourth is that a focus on school culture can lead to a belief in its uniqueness and the futility in examining other organisations from which they could learn. Finally, that a focus on qualitative research can lead to the disparagement of quantitative data and of the utility of the wider picture, and of the benefits of an appreciation of trends and patterns. These concerns and weaknesses about some school improvement research, are also a reflection and possible illustration of the cultural and traditional tendencies of some independent schools, which can be, due to their nature and history, inward looking organisations.

However, in order to address some of these criticisms attempts have been made to generate theories of school improvement and both Hopkins(1996) and Fidler (2001) suggest that it is possible to identify future needs in schools which take account of changes in the world outside the school, using the perspectives of a variety of stakeholders, to balance those with internal resources and existing norms and values in

order to create a long-term improvement strategy, which is holistic and would meet the criticisms.

In his article 'The idols of the market place' Hamilton (1998) challenges some of the claims of school improvement research with the aim of providing a more theoretically robust basis for understanding, evaluating and developing the work of schools and the experiences of teachers and children. He discusses the problems of interpretation and the findings which are presented as predictions in much of the research findings; especially as schools and classrooms are multivariate, non-linear and adaptive places. He emphasises that the behaviour of teachers, headteachers and pupils is not statistically straightforward and as a result therefore there can a weak theoretical base. As a consequence of this, Hamilton (1998) argues for attention to be given to the value suppositions of schools, and that the similarities, differences and the exceptions in the processes and outcomes, which schools experience during the improvement process, should be the focus of further research, in order to develop theoretical understanding.

The school improvement literature has not always recognised the complexity of classrooms and can sometimes assume a top down approach which is often focused upon the school level organisation and leadership; however, I believe that an awareness of the context of the classroom and the priorities of those working within it are essential in promoting improvement. It is in classrooms where the crucial decision-making occurs. If the crux of school improvement is the quality of teaching and learning, then this is where the focus of research now needs to be.

Finally, school improvement literature can rest upon many assumptions. Firstly it assumes that all schools are embedded in a national framework of legislation, that all schools view educational improvement as a normative ideal of a desirable future and that there is a desire to develop an infrastructure for improvement. Secondly, it infers that a systematic co-ordination of activities is the key to successful school development and that it is only through rigorous school development planning processes that innovation can take place, (DfEE 1988a). Thirdly, it could be viewed that this process is simple and easy to implement.

Reality, however, is not wholly manageable, and schools do not always work on planned improvements on a systematic basis. The work of Gray, et al., (1999) demonstrates that in general, schools casually try changes before systematising them. The assumption that the entire school development process can be rationally planned is, therefore, something of a myth. School 2. in the case studies, illustrated that there can be numerous unpredictable circumstances, sudden events, psychological and emotional factors that can affect any over-rigorous planning. Further, my observations of preparatory schools have shown that effective planning does not come naturally to many headteachers and teachers, who can confuse decisions and intentions with plans. Many of the planned school improvement approaches have also envisaged schools as similar places and have not always given enough weight to schools' unique nature and their context specificity. Therefore, the next section will consider the above issue.

Consistency in strategies for school improvement

One of the intriguing factors associated with independent schools is that they celebrate,

protect and nurture their uniqueness and distinctiveness when compared to other schools. Indeed, the schools use this as a basis of promoting themselves to parents and therefore, these schools are not attempting to be consistent in what they purport to offer. Moreover, this philosophy is not unique to independent schools. Each maintained school develops their aims and objectives and considers what is special and different about the services that they offer to their pupils, parents and local community. Therefore, as schools do not see themselves as consistently similar, there is no possibility that a homogeneous 'one size fits all' school improvement model can work.

Secondly, children as learners are very individual and distinct. The work of Witkin *et al*. (1977), Hudson (1979), Pask (1976), Kolb (1984) and Gardner (1993) recognised that learners have different approaches and styles of learning, although there have been few attempts to merge this knowledge into pedagogy until the development of neurological cognitivism in the last five years.

The work of Whitty *et al*. (1994:11) argued that:

> Schooling can be seen as inculcation into the very different discourses of the various ways of seeing and making sense of the world through subjects. Different clusters of subjects are quite different from one another and require different attitudes, behaviours and activities on the part of the pupils.

It also follows that pedagogy and indeed, classrooms themselves should ideally look quite different for different subjects. Harris and Bennett (2001:51) also argued that, based on the work of Wenger (1988) and Bennett (1991, 1995), "the imposition of consistency in the pursuit of imposed goals or outcomes may be difficult to achieve and may not be a sound aim for school improvement consultants."

Thirdly, there appears to be a tacit assumption in some of the school improvement

literature that school populations are relatively homogeneous or at least can be treated as such for teaching purposes. However, when teachers are working with children in classrooms they are managing factors such as ethnicity, gender and ability.

Fourthly, teachers are the crucial element in any school improvement/development process. Teachers are unlikely to be motivated or to give their best if they are part of an organisation that does not recognise their particular values, experiences, preferred teaching style and approach.

The final factor is the schools themselves. Schools have to adapt the teaching strategies, organisation and structure to meet the needs of the children. This is a dynamic process and gives the teachers an active role in adapting their school and their teaching strategies to the point where young people become committed and motivated to achieve.

Although the six schools in this study are all independent preparatory schools, they have different traditions, histories and needs. As was suggested earlier in this section, it is unlikely that a homogeneous 'one size fits all' model would work, therefore, this research, in line with the ideas of 'authentic' improvement developed by Hopkins (2001) will examine the strategic choices that school managers make, the involvement and development of teachers and the impact of the improvement process over the structure and the culture of the schools.

The human elements of planned school improvement processes

The first section of the literature review critically examined some of the school improvement literature and the second considered the problems with the paradigm, the

wider controversies and issues of school improvement. This third section will consider the processes of planned school improvement. However, it will not address the technical steps of the process but the domains that impact on the people within the schools, such as the involvement of teachers, building their capacity in terms of improving teaching and developing leadership across the school. The purpose is to analyse the literature that has considered teacher development and involvement, because without a "commitment amongst staff to innovation and change, it is clear that improvement efforts are unlikely to succeed." (Harris, 2002:32)

> The development of knowledge in the area of educational change has a capricious nature and shows much resemblance to the process of trial and error, in which insight grows, as experience with attempts at educational change grows. (Hopkins and Larerweij, 1996:51)

As Harris (2002:23) says:

> The process of school improvement inevitably involves some form of change. It is important to remember, however, that 'not all change leads to school improvement' (Fullan, 1991). Some changes can actually be counter-productive to school development or are so complex that they prove impossible to implement. Superficial change can also be a distraction and a way of avoiding serious development work. Within schools that are, improving there usually exists a 'climate for change' or 'a climate of improvement' . This essentially means that the school is committed to improvement and is prepared to engage in cultural change.

Creating the conditions for improvement

Developing the right conditions has been found to be a necessary prerequisite for effective improvement. A reason for the failure of change often lies in a lack of careful attention to the process of improvement. "While the instigation of change is relatively straightforward, the subsequent interpretation and implementation of any change is more difficult" (Harris 2002:41). As Fullan (1991:63) has summarised, "educational change is technically simple and socially complex."

Planned improvement deliberately seeks to alter and interrupt the natural course of events. (Fullan 1991) It is a conscious intervention that is purposive, aiming to establish new practices and structures. Therefore, successful school improvement involves careful planning for the proposed change and the anticipation of problems or barriers before the improvement is introduced.

Fullan (1991:) suggests that at the crux of change is how individuals respond to and experience the proposed improvement. Few individuals in an organisation appreciate how multidimensional change really is; "we tend to espouse a comfortably simplistic notion of it." (Everard and Morris 1990:22). Evans (1989) described a range of actions that can be undertaken which will assist in creating the conditions for improvement. He suggested that the soundness of a proposed improvement needed to be assessed. Others such as, Bolam (1978), Beckhard and Harris (1987) and Fullan (1982) stress the crucial nature of the improvement being focused on improving the learning process and/or outcomes and that the objective needs to be based on a rigorous reconnaissance of the learning needs. As has already been said, much educational change is technically simple but socially complex, and the complexity arises not so much from dogged opposition of narrow-minded staff as from the difficulty of planning and organising a multi-dimensional process involving many people, all with different perceptions and outlooks.

Therefore, the process of creating the right conditions needs to ensure that there is clarity about the goals, the means of effecting the improvement and the possible outcomes and consequences for practice (Wenger 1998).

The final aspect of creating the right conditions is the planning process. The work of MacGilchrist (1997) has shown that effective plans need to begin with learning goals for students and a teaching strategy for achieving the goals which is supported by any necessary adjustments to the school's management arrangements. This is a radically different type of plan from one that simply focuses on the implementation of change or the development of school-wide policies and practices, which may not have a direct impact on classroom practice. It is through collective planning (Hopkins, 2001) that the goals emerge, differences may be resolved and a basis for action is created. The plan is often a by-product of this activity and often the benefits will outlast the currency of the plan. The next two sections will develop this thinking by considering issues related to the staff.

Challenging involvement of the staff

Challenge is an interesting word and does not always suggest a notion of confrontation in the sense of conflict, except perhaps a certain amount of confronting in the sense of making clear to all parties. A dictionary definition (found in Terrell and Leask, 1997:62) may include the following:

- an invitation to do something;
- to call something into question;
- to make demands upon;
- to stimulate;
- to make a formal objection to;
- to engage in a fight, argument or contest;
- to question a fact, statement or act;
- to establish a goal or target.

The exploratory study that I have undertaken (see chapter 4) revealed that in some schools, teachers felt that they rarely met with senior managers; where it was not known

what they, as teachers, did; and their contribution to the aims and goals of the school was not clear to them. In effect, they were not being challenged, valued or given recognition (Gray, *et al.*, 1999). Negotiating clear goals, actions, targets and success criteria is an important part of the improvement process. It is how the vision turns into plans for departments and actions for individuals. The process is about the negotiation of demands and priorities. For some, the demands may need to be specific and constrained. For others the demands could be more open ended (Reynolds, 1991).

Capacity building

The importance of teacher development within school improvement has long been established (Harris 2002). Hopkins *et al.* (1996:85) demonstrated that teachers develop through enquiry into and reflection upon their own practice and pointed to the fact that school improvement is a process that is data-driven and engages teachers in personal reflection. Building capacity for school improvement implies a profound change in schools as organisations. Sackney *et al.* (1998:97) argued that:

> The post modern era suggests a conception of organisations as processes and relationships rather than as structures and rules with conversation as the central medium for the creation of both individual meaning and organisational change. From this perspective, the image of schools as learning organisations seems like a promising response to the continuing demands for re-structuring.

A systematic and integrated approach to staff development, that focuses on the professional learning of teachers and establishes the classroom as an important centre for teacher development is central to school improvement. Staff development is the central strategy for supporting teachers as they engage in improvement activities. Fullan (1991) described a bleak picture when he reviewed the effects of the 'traditional' approaches of staff development, on pupils' learning and learning outcomes. He found it to be poorly

conceptualised, insensitive to the concerns of individual participants, and perhaps critically, making little effort to help participants relate their learning experiences to their usual workplace conditions.

In contrast, the work of Joyce and Calhoun (1996) demonstrated that if infrastructures for staff development were able to combine teachers' learning, engagement and development with their day-to-day experiences, the research evidence revealed high levels of students engagement, learning and improved performance.

Joyce and Showers (1995) identified a number of key training components which, when used in combination, have a much greater power than when they are used alone. Joyce (1992), also distinguished between the locations in which these various forms of staff development are best located. The research evidence that has emerged from the work of Joyce and his various partners, has shown that teachers need a range of practical workshop type opportunities that will help them to up-date or improve their knowledge and understanding of the teaching process, but that they also need opportunities to transfer the knowledge and skills vertically and horizontally.

Hopkins (2001:57) believes that:

> The paradox is that changes to the workplace cannot be achieved without, in most cases, drastic alterations in the ways in which schools are organised. Yet, the transfer of teaching skills from INSET sessions to classroom settings will not occur without them. Consequently, staff development is perhaps the most crucial of the enabling conditions for school improvement.

The literature reviewed in this section so far, has emphasised the importance of creating the right conditions in order for improvement to take place, and that building capacity for improvement implies a profound change in schools as organisations. Therefore, it is appropriate to consider in the next section, who will create and manage the internal conditions that will enable and support these changes.

Releasing leadership from the middle

Perhaps too often we have relied upon the 'image' of the leader. Bradford and Cohen (1984) adopted the term "heroic leader" for those who:

- have single handedly turned round an organisation;
- know everything about what is going on;
- have more knowledge and expertise than ordinary folk;
- can solve any problems that arise.

They argued that such leadership often blocked communication, was slow to respond to change, frequently led to poor quality decisions, underestimated the capacity of staff, leading to fewer expectations of them.

Real transformational leadership is empowering and is focused on releasing the leadership of others (Leithwood *et al.* 1999). In schools it is to be found in the leadership of the middle managers and the post holders, as well as in headteachers and senior management teams. Foster (1989:35-6) argued that leadership should be communal and shared, that "leaders exist only because of the relationship with followers, and that this relationship allows followers to assume leadership and leaders, in turn, to become followers." This is an interesting concept for it sees the function of leadership as one of providing the conditions for other leaders to emerge. A broader illustration can be found

in the work of Hopkins *et al*. (1994). The issue for school leaders is then one of how to develop leadership in the school. In larger schools the middle manager, the head of department and the post holder may be prime candidates as leaders. Terrell and Leask (1997) described the concept of leadership from the middle. How to develop leadership from middle managers by 'developing the behaviours of teachers as they engage in activities directly affecting the growth of students (Leithwood, 1999), is a key issue for senior managers.

Instructional leadership as proposed by Hallinger and Murphy (1985), suggested a model that was focused on student learning and outcomes, that was able to manage the instructional programme and promote the school climate.

Therefore, it would seem that in terms of a leadership model, appropriate for 'authentic' (Hopkins 2001) school improvement, that a conceptual combination of transformational and instructional orientations would seem most suitable (Hopkins, 2001). He argues for a model of leadership that will encourage and develop multi-level leadership built around agreed values; that empowers the organisational culture and is democratic. These findings are compatible with those of Louis and Miles (1990), Joyce and Calhoun (1996) and Joyce, et al. (1999).

> Multiple partnerships with variable leadership, offer a more appropriate set of structural norms, and are more likely to impact upon classrooms and student learning. (Hopkins, 2001:7)

For teacher leadership to be maximised there have to be shared values and goals along with the ability to take action. Harris (2002) has examined the conditions and actions that need to be developed in order to develop teacher leadership. She itemised four roles

or dimensions. The first was brokering, which ensured that links between whole school level and classroom level are in place and that opportunities for meaningful development among teachers are enhanced. The second dimension was for teacher leaders to offer guidance by encouraging their colleagues towards collective goals. The third dimension was a mediating role, leading to the fourth and possibly the most important dimension of the teacher leadership role, that of affiliation. This requires the forging of close relationships with other teachers in order that mutual learning can take place. The way in which teachers learn together has been shown to be an important determinant of school improvement (Harris, 2002 and Lambert 1998).

If, as suggested above, mutual learning is an important determinant then the typical organisation of these independent schools, which was based around fixed and rigid roles, could not support the development of empowered individuals and teams. As the case studies illustrate, the schools had to discover or evolve processes and systems that fused the innovative mutual learning of the staff with adaptive, responsive and flexible management structures.

Complexities of pedagogical improvement

This fourth of and final section of the literature review will examine the literature on pedagogy and the suggestions for successful planned pedagogical improvement.

> School improvement is ultimately about the enhancement of children's progress, development and achievements, so it's not surprising that most research evidence points towards the importance of teacher development in school development. It has been shown that schools that are successful, facilitate the learning of both students and teachers. (Harris, 2002:41)

The classroom is the dominant place where learning and teaching take place but, until

recently, a common response to the challenge of improving schools has been to mobilise change efforts at the level of the whole school. There is now a growing recognition that attempts to bring about school improvement will have a limited impact in raising student performance and achievement unless a multi-level approach to development is adopted that encompasses school, departmental and classroom level (Harris, 2002). To shift the focus to classroom level requires investing in developmental approaches that make the maximum impact on student and teacher learning.

Effective learning

Effective teachers engage children in the process of helping them 'learn how to learn.' The consciousness of this is called meta-cognition. There are many theories, psychological concepts, principles and processes that have been identified as effective learning strategies and approaches. These have focused on cognitive learning theories, which addressed complex forms of learning like problem solving and understanding language; behavioural theories that were developed by psychologists such as Pavlov and Skinner, where the teacher was seen as the trainer and provider of rewards and punishments. Social and personality theory development grew from a desire to account for the difference between individuals in the ways they learn and make sense of the world and saw the teacher as a facilitator; and finally the humanist learning theories which attempted to explain how children feel and how their capacity to feel was changed by various sorts of group and teaching experiences. In this theory, the role of the teacher was that of managing and organising the right conditions so that effective learning can take place.

The teacher's task is not simply to teach, but to create powerful contexts for learning.

Joyce (1997:86) expressed the idea in this way:

> Learning experiences are composed of content, process and social climate. As teachers, we create for and with our children, opportunities to explore and build important areas of knowledge, develop powerful tools for learning, and live in humanising social conditions. Our toolbox is the models of teaching, actually models for learning that simultaneously define the nature of the content, the learning strategies, and the arrangements for social interaction that create the learning environment for our students. Through the selection of appropriate models, content can become conceptual rather than particular, the process can become constructive enquiry instead of passive reception, and the social climate can become expansive not restrictive. Our choices depend on the range of our active teaching repertoire and our efforts to expand it by developing new models and studying those developed by others. Interestingly, the most powerful models of teaching adapt flexibly to a wide spectrum of curriculum areas and types of learners. They work when teaching phonics and physics. They help both the 'gifted' and those most at 'risk' of failure. They do not tolerate socio-economic or gender differences as inhibitors of learning but, instead, capitalise on them. Their effects are enhanced by variety in cultural and linguistic background.

Bruner (1966:27) has written about the dialectic between the curriculum, teaching and learning:

> What I have said suggests that mental growth is in very considerable measure dependent upon growth from the outside in – mastering of techniques that are embodied in the culture and that are passed on in a contingent dialogue by agents of the culture…..I suspect that much of growth starts out by our turning around on our own traces and recoding in new forms, with the aid of adult tutors, what we have been doing or seeing, then going on to new modes of organisation with the new products that have been formed by these recodings….It is this that leads me to think that the heart of the educational process consists of providing aids and dialogues for translating experience into more powerful systems of notation and ordering. And it is for this reason that I think a theory of development must be linked to a theory of knowledge and to a theory of instruction, or be doomed to triviality.

Bruner argues for an integration of the ways in which individuals develop and grow, the ways they are taught, and what it is they are taught. Teaching is more than just presenting material, it is about infusing curriculum content with appropriate instructional strategies that are selected in order to achieve the learning goals that the teacher has for their students. (Hopkins 2001). The literature on how children learn (Wood 1998 and Gardner 1993) is helpful in designing increasingly effective learning experiences within 'authentic' (Hopkins 2001) school improvement contexts.

The literature shows that effective learning always involves a modification of what the learner already knows or believes. Learning therefore, can be guided and assisted successfully only in the light of this understanding (Harris 2002).

Glaser (1991:79) summarised this approach to learning:

> Learning is an active, constructive, intellectual process that occurs gradually over a period of time. It is not simply an additive process. Knowledge cannot, to use a common metaphor, be poured into learners' heads with the hope that learning will automatically occur or accumulate. Understanding of new knowledge can only take place, or be constructed in the minds of individual learners through a process of making sense of that new knowledge in the light of what they already know. In other words, learning is a process of constructing new knowledge on the basis of current knowledge.

Effective teaching

A useful way of defining effective teaching, would be to take Glaser's quote from above, on learning, and substitute the word teaching or teacher for the words learning and learner. Harris and Hopkins (2000) have stated that effective teaching involves creating a learning environment which emphasises learning goals and makes them explicit; outlines learning purposes and potential learning outcomes; carefully organises and sequences curriculum experiences; explains and illustrates what students are to learn; frequently asks direct and specific questions to monitor students' progress and check their understanding; provides students with ample opportunity to practise, gives prompts and feedback to ensure success and corrects errors and reviews regularly and holds students accountable for work.

> From this perspective, a teacher promotes learning by being active in planning, organising and leading instruction. (Tabberer 1996)

My definition of teaching (which was explained in the introduction of this study) saw

teaching as an act of using methods to enable pupils to learn. The methods included tasks, activities, interaction and judgements. As teaching takes place in classroom settings, it also demands structure and form which is affected by the teacher's ability to organise and manage time, space, resources and patterns of pupil organisation, expectations, social interactions, behaviour and relationships. The teacher is aiming for optimal learning, which is when the learning is accelerated and maximised in order to enable the learner to reach their potential. The teacher deliberately plans for and consistently implements a combination of teaching methods and strategies that develop the brain and emotions, by using activities that connect the neurones, encourage interaction between the hemispheres and meet the learner's preferred learning style, interests and needs. This type of teaching is memorable, relevant, interesting, meaningful and engages the emotions of the learner. (Wilson 2002).

Teachers have a range of teaching skills, styles, models and approaches that comprise a teaching repertoire. Consequently, a core task of school improvement is to maximise the effectiveness of teachers, by presenting opportunities that will extend and develop these teaching repertoires. Within all schools there will be varying levels of knowledge, skill, expertise and experience across the group of teachers. Teachers require capacity building opportunities through effective professional development, so that they can continually revise, adapt and develop their teaching repertoire. The sharing of practice, ideas and strategies is an essential element to developing individuals' approaches and instructional methods.

Pedagogy

This research is focused on understanding the processes and outcomes of planned pedagogical improvement. A definition of pedagogy was included in the introduction to this study, which stated that pedagogy is much wider and deeper than teaching ,as it contains all of the elements of teaching but it also contains the contingent discourses about the character of culture, the purpose of education, the nature of childhood, knowledge and understanding of how children learn and a knowledge and understanding of the structure of knowledge.

> It encompasses the performance of teaching together with the theories, beliefs, policies and controversies that inform and shape it. Pedagogy connects the apparently self-contained act of teaching with culture, structure and mechanisms of social control. (Alexander, 2001:214)

> Successful schools and effective learning cannot be achieved through central government regulated assessment systems, teacher-proof materials or regulated curricula. In order to create bridges between common, challenging curriculum goals and individual learners' experiences and needs, teachers need more than just a tool-box of teaching methods to call upon.
> (Darling-Hammond, 1997:87)

Darling-Hammond then argued that teachers need "a rigorous and rightly coupled theoretical base of knowledge." This view that teachers are more than technicians who 'deliver' the curriculum is the core of pedagogical improvement processes.

> The reliance on the imposition of similar models of teaching expertise can create inflexibility among teachers and make it hard for them to exercise proper discretionary judgements in their classrooms. It can lead to teacher resistance because of implicit rejections of the worth and value of the rest of a teacher's repertoire, and of the life and the person that has been invested in building it up. (Hargreaves, 1997:19)

If a school or an education system is just reliant on improving methods, the risk is that this can become focused purely on learner outcomes. Learner outcomes are important but the process of learning has to be developed, in order to improve the outcomes (Brophy and Good 1986). In order for this to happen, schools need to be able to develop teachers' knowledge of multiple models of teaching that are grounded in and arise from

collective wisdom of the community of teachers in the profession (now and in the past) and other educationalists – this means pedagogy.

The knowledge and understanding of how to utilise a variety of teaching models, methods, skills, forms of organisation and relationships (Hopkins *et al*. 1994, Hopkins 1997, 2000, Hopkins and Harris 2000) that meet the cultural, educational, social and emotional needs of the learner cannot be acquired in isolation but need to be developed within the context of the classroom. (Evertson and Harris 1992, Kounin 1970, Macmurray 1961 and Peters 1974.)

One of the difficulties within the profession and 'authentic' school improvement is the lack of sufficiently sophisticated language and coherent frameworks within which to consider teaching. Being an effective teacher is more than simply updating understanding of methods and models, it also requires modifying teaching behaviour in order to enhance the learning of children. Brown (1995:8) argued that the "ways in which teachers conceptualise pupils' progress, and the kind of classroom support that is required to promote that progress, are much more complex and rich than he conceptions of progress and support implicit (in the) school effectiveness research."

"The disjuncture between the language of research and the language of teachers is a major barrier to innovation and development in schools."(Hopkins, 2001:93) This is what makes pedagogical improvement processes so critical, as a school improvement strategy has to reflect the implicit theories of the practitioners, because the change efforts need to reflect the experience of teachers and the context of their classrooms.

Fullan (1995:27) makes a similar point:

> If schools as learning organisations are not to be a distant dream, teachers need to expand their notions of teaching within the context of capacity building and action enquiry. Changes in teaching practice only occur when there is clarity and coherence in the minds of teachers. This clarity needs to be at the receiving end rather than at the delivery end.

Summary

The school improvement research has not always recognised the complexity of classrooms; however, I believe that an awareness of this context and the priorities of those working within it are essential in promoting change. It is in classrooms that the crucial decision-making school improvement process occurs. If the crux of school improvement is the quality of teaching and learning, then this is where the focus of research now needs to be.

> The management of change is fraught with tensions: tensions between desired change and imposed, often unwanted, change; between planned and unplanned; between systematic planning and evolutionary change.
> Garret, (1997:87)

All changes involve some form of transition from an old state to a new (Adams, *et al.*, 1976). These transitions may be both desired and expected or they may be not desired but expected or unexpected. All of these changes will cause a certain amount of tension to the individual but this may not always be negative. Garrett (1997) has provided a view of the stages that individuals pass through when experiencing change, whether planned or unplanned. She argues that the change manager (headteacher or post holder?) has to understand that everyone will go through this process at her/his own pace and that time must be allowed for this process. Understanding the individuals involved and the organisation itself is crucial for successful change and is the focus of the case studies.

This chapter has presented a review of the literature concerned with school improvement, teaching, learning and pedagogy and noted the weaknesses as well as major findings. In presenting the problems, controversies and deficiencies in the literature I have set out the directions for this study, since it was undertaken, in part, as a response to the limitations. The next chapter will describe the methods that I have used to approach and conduct the research for this study and will build on the reading that has been undertaken.

Understanding the Process and Outcomes of Planned Pedagogical Improvement in Independent Preparatory Schools

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The previous chapter highlighted specific aspects and issues within the literature that are relevant to this study into pedagogical and school improvement processes. The literature provided direction for this study, and in this chapter I will describe how I approached and conducted the study, which forms the basis of this thesis.

The chapter is divided into five sections. The first section focuses upon the background to ethnography, case study, and educational enquiry; in this section, I shall explain my understanding of ethnographic enquiry to make explicit the assumptions upon which this research is based. The second section examines the design of the research, the propositions of the study and the research questions. The third section looks in detail at how I conducted the research. This section is broken into six sub-sections, which deal with the exploratory study; access and entry; field work; recording data; data analysis and writing. The fourth section examines issues related to reliability and validity and the fifth section highlights things I have learned, regarding methodology, from conducting the research.

Ethnography, Case Study and Educational Enquiry

In this section, I shall explain my understanding of ethnographic enquiry to make explicit the assumptions upon which this research is based. By definition, ethnography is descriptive (Woods 1985:52). An ethnography is "a 'picture' of the way of life of some interacting human group" (Wolcott, 1975:112). Yet, ethnography is not wholly

descriptive since analysis is also present, to varying degrees, in ethnographic studies (Seymour-Smith 1986:98). Derived from anthropology, ethnography

> .....is concerned with what people are, how they behave, how they interact together. It aims to uncover their beliefs, values, perspectives, motivations and how all these things develop or change over time or from situation to situation. It tries to do this from within the group and within the perspectives of the group members. (Woods, 1986:4)

Therefore, while an emphasis will be placed upon description, this will not exclude analysis. Moreover, description and analysis are not the only aims. Ethnographers also strive to understand another way of life from the subject's point of view (Spradley, 1980:3). Ethnography, then is the description and analysis of a community or group which seeks to present with understanding the subject's perspective. As such, there are four related points to note and discuss.

Understanding groups and culture

First, Woods, Wolcott and others (see Rainbow, 1977:151; Peacock, 1986:146) made it plain that ethnography is fundamentally concerned with understanding groups and cultures. However, this study is concerned with only six schools and although these schools are all independent preparatory schools the study will not, by itself, provide sufficient description to understand the culture of all independent schools, if such a phenomenon exists. Rather, this study, like most accounts labelled ethnography, is only a "contribution towards the ethnography of some culture-sharing human groups." (Wolcott 1975:112). What I have attempted is an ethnographic approach to studying a group of independent preparatory schools, before, during, and after undergoing a episode of planned pedagogical improvement.

Description and interpretation

The second point concerns description and interpretation. Ethnographers place particular emphasis on describing, often in detail, the social interactions and settings of the subjects they are studying. (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983:8; Spradley, 1980:73-84) Like certain visual artists, the ethnographer "works with great care at capturing both the general and essential characteristics and the finer points which underpin them" (Woods 1985:53). One aim of ethnography is to provide a 'thick' description of the subject and settings observed (Geertz, 1973), whose virtue is verisimilitude (Stenhouse 1982:267). Yet, description is not an end in itself. The intention is not to present

> .....merely surface detail. The ethnographer is interested in what lies beneath – the subject's views, which may contain alternative views, and their views of each other. From these, the ethnographer may perceive patterns in accounts, or in observed behaviour which may suggest certain interpretations. (Woods, 198:5)

Indeed, interpretation is both inevitable and necessary. It is inevitable because the ethnographer always labels and categorises his/her observations and these reflect his/her own situation and consciousness, as well as that of the subjects observed.

> Description is also interpretation, for one categorises and labels – indeed, constructs – his data even as he 'records' them..... The impossibility of making a carbon copy of reality and therefore the necessity of interpreting even as one describes is true in all sciences. (Peacock, 1986:66-67)

Interpretation

Thirdly, interpretation is necessary because ethnography is essentially concerned with the meaning of actions and events to the people we seek to understand (Spradley 1980:5). The ethnographer especially wants to record and report "the meaning the actors themselves assign to events in which they engage" (Wolcott 1975:113), as well as the meaning of symbolic forms such as language and appearance (Woods 1986:10). The ethnographer aims to represent the reality studied in all its various layers of social

meaning, seeking to give a thorough and faithful description of the relationship between all the elements characteristic of the chosen topic.

Understood in this way, ethnography provides an alternative view to that of the positivists (Geertz 1983:19-35, Peacock 1986:68-70). Ethnography is located within the perspective of naturalism and is often associated with symbolic interaction which rejects the stimulus-response model of human behaviour built into the methodological arguments of positivism.

> In the view of interactionists, people interpret stimuli and those interpretations, continually under revision as events unfold, shape their actions..... According to naturalism, in order to understand people's behaviour we must use an approach that gives us access to the meanings that guide that behaviour..... As participant observers, we can learn the culture or sub-culture of the people we are studying. We can come to interpret the world in the same way they do.
>
> (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983:7)

Yet, in addition to studying people through ethnography, it also means learning from people in order to discover the hidden principles of another way of life and the rules-largely implicit – that guide the subject's conduct (Woods 1986:10). The researcher must become a student and the subjects become the teachers (Spradley 1980:3-4)

Discovery of meanings

Fourthly, description and interpretation facilitate the discovery of meanings which, when explicated, can be used to test existing social theories about how groups and individuals are thought to behave. Although ethnography is often used to generate and develop theories (Woods 1986:153, Strauss 1987:5, Hopkins 2001:22, Harris 2000:17), it can also be used to test the theory (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983:19), although that is not an aim of this investigation.

It is common for the ethnographer to report his research in a case-study mode. Indeed, according to Yin, case studies are often confused with ethnographies (1989:23), yet case study is a research strategy in its own right. Hence, in conducting an ethnographic investigation of these schools, which will be reported as multiple case studies, I need to make explicit not only what I mean by ethnography, but also what I understand by case study.

Case study

Yin (1989:15), argues that case studies can be exploratory, explanatory, or descriptive. While the boundaries between these three types are not clear and sharp and overlap occurs, it follows from the discussion of ethnography that in this research the initial study was exploratory and the four case studies that were developed from the exploratory study are largely descriptive, albeit, with riders (above) about the analysis and interpretation applied.

I also find Yin's technical definition helpful. A case study is an empirical inquiry that:

- investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when
- the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which
- multiple sources of evidence are used. (1989:23)

Yin's definition makes explicit the fact that case study research is the examination of a particular phenomenon such as an event, process, an individual, an institution or, in terms of this research, institutions undergoing a process. In addition, case studies are concerned with contexts. As Walker (1986:189) says, the case study worker collects information on biography, intentions, and values which allows the researcher to "capture and portray those elements of a situation that give it meaning." Moreover, the researcher uses

evidence from a number of sources. Such evidence helps the researcher avoid too strong a reliance upon any single source and facilitates an examination of the particular phenomenon from other angles and perspectives.

It follows from this definition that case study needs to reflect a number of operational characteristics. Moreover, given that I am undertaking an ethnographic study, the characteristics need to be consistent with the canons of qualitative research. These canons have been set out at length by Lincoln and Guba (1985:39-42) and can be summarised as follows:

- The research is conducted in a natural setting;
- The researcher is the primary data-gathering instrument and uses his or her tacit (intuitive, felt) knowledge;
- The researcher, by using qualitative methods, eschews random sampling in favour of purposive samples;
- Inductive data analysis is preferred and emerging theory is understood as grounded;
- The research design emerges and unfolds, as against being pre-ordinately designed, and outcomes and interpretations are negotiated with the human sources from which the data have been chiefly drawn;
- The research is reported in a case-study mode;
- Interpretations of the data are based upon the particulars of the case, rather than in terms of law like generalisations;
- The researcher is tentative about making broad application of the findings because realities are multiple (Lincoln and Guba, 1985:42).

Some researchers regard generalising from a case study as problematic. Critics of case study typically states that case studies provide a "poor basis for generalising." Yin (1989:43) believes that:

> Such critics are implicitly contrasting the situation to survey research, where a 'sample' (if selected correctly) readily generalizes to a larger universe. *This analogy to samples and universes is incorrect when dealing with cases.* This is because survey research relies on *statistical* generalizations, whereas case study (as with experiments) relies on analytical generalization. (Yin, 1989:43)

In analytical generalisation, the researcher attempts to generalise a particular set of

findings to border, bound and ground a theory. The researcher does not seek to enumerate frequencies, rather the goal is to expand and generalise theories.

Although ethnographers do not accept the 'positivists' notion of causality, they nevertheless retain a need for explanation in order to answer the question (Lincoln and Guba, 1985:151). As Woods (1986:153) acknowledges, ethnographers are always seeking to explain. While the explanations will be grounded in particular cases where local conditions make it impossible to generalise statistically, working hypotheses can be tentatively advanced for both the situation in which they are first uncovered and for other situations (Lincoln and Guba, 1985:124). However, the researcher's explanations and hypotheses lead to plausible imputations of what was found in the case settings.

It is possible to combine these two points. In studying multiple cases, I do not seek to generalise to all independent preparatory schools or primary schools nationally. Rather I wish to examine a group of schools in order to explore, and, perhaps, examine the issues to the relatability of these schools' experiences of pedagogical improvement, school improvement, and the management of change.

Multiple case designs have distinct advantages and disadvantages in comparison with single-case designs. The evidence from multiple cases is often considered more compelling, and the overall study is therefore regarded as being more robust (Yin, 1994:32). The disadvantage is that the conduct of a multiple case study requires extensive resources and time. Therefore, the decision to undertake multiple-case studies cannot be taken lightly. Every case should serve a specific purpose within the overall scope of

inquiry. Here, "a major insight is to consider multiple cases as one would consider multiple experiments" (Yin, 1994:41), that is, to follow a "replication" logic. This is far different from a mistaken analogy in the past, which incorrectly considered multiple cases to be similar to the multiple respondents in a survey. The methodological differences between these two views are revealed by the different rationales underlying the replication as proposed to sampling logic.

The replication approach to multiple-case studies begins with the initial step in designing the study, which must consist of theory development; this is then followed by case selection and then the definition of specific measures. Each individual case study of the process of pedagogical improvement is a 'whole' study, in which convergent evidence is sought regarding the facts about the school and conclusions are developed for the case. For each individual school case study, the summary report indicates how and why a particular proposition was demonstrated (or not demonstrated).

> For the number of theoretical replications, the important consideration is related to your sense of the complexity of the realm of external validity. When you are uncertain whether external conditions will produce different case study results, you may want to articulate these relevant conditions more explicitly at the outset of your study and identify a larger number of cases to be included. (Yin, 1994:49).

Finally, case study can provide interpretations of other similar cases. Although full generalisability cannot be claimed for case studies, they have the property of 'relatability' (Bassey, 1981:23). The rounded picture a case study gives could be sufficiently lifelike to be compared with other examples, when similarities and differences can readily be identified.

Educational enquiry

I now wish to turn to the idea of educational enquiry. It is necessary to do so because ethnography originated from anthropology and has subsequently been adopted as a research tool of sociologists. While ethnography is now commonly used in educational research, educational research should aim to contribute to educational theory and practice. Therefore, my study is educational ethnography. That is not to change what I have already said about the aims of ethnography and case study as a research tool, but it is to make explicit the purposes of the study.

In regarding this study as an educational ethnographic multiple case study I wish to draw attention to two related points. Firstly, although the study will involve uncovering and describing the subjects' beliefs, motivations, relationships, forms of organisation and rules of conduct, my intention is not solely to produce a study about practitioners, but also one for practitioners. This distinction derives from Stenhouse (1982:269) who was concerned that research should be of benefit and interest to those who are studied; and also from the work of multi-disciplinary researchers, who believe that there are many ways of thinking about research (what it is for and who it is for?) and who believe that there should be a theme of risk which gives a voice to the people who are being studied.

A major goal in undertaking this research was to develop insights that had practical value and were meaningful for teachers and headteachers and addressed issues and problems that they recognised and dealt with. In other words, the research is not an end in itself.

However, I cannot deny that I also have a selfish motive in the work, since, in part, the study reflected a desire to gain a further qualification. I primarily undertook the

work to improve my understanding of the management of pedagogical and school improvement, in order, through my work with teachers and headteachers in both the independent and maintained sectors in the United Kingdom, and teachers working in post-conflict situations in the Middle East and Eastern Europe, to share with them my ideas and learning. This sharing process aims to strengthen teachers' and headteachers' critical awareness of their work in schools and how others, such as myself, interpret their actions. This research addresses educational issues and seeks to develop understanding of the school improvement processes but also to develop practice.

Having set out my views on ethnographic multiple case study enquiry in education, its aims and audience, I have also indicated the ground rules for this research. In the next section, I will try to show how I followed these rules as far as I was able.

2 The research design, proposition, and questions

For the purpose of the research, I have defined school improvement as enhancing student outcomes and strengthening the school's capacity for managing change. Hopkins gave a definition that defines school improvement as:

> Raising student achievement through focusing on the teaching and learning process and the conditions, which support it. It is about strategies for improving the school's capacity for providing quality education in times of change, rather than blindly accepting the edicts of centralised policies and striving to implement these directives. (1994:29)

Clearly, the headteacher and teachers must work on a notion of what improvement is. Children's achievement is central in its broadest sense, and not just in the sense of academic achievement. There is a call for recognition of the importance of the whole curriculum, of spiritual, moral and social education and of the development of social skills. Hopkins focused upon building the internal conditions and the capacity of the

school to take on external pressures of change.

As a consequence of the external pressures for change, during the 1980s and 1990s in the maintained sector and during the 1990s in the independent sector, there was an explosion of school management and leadership as a field of activity, legislation, research, literature, advice and guidance. As in any explosion, a small core of matter grew in volume and became disconnected. Hence the document "From Targets to Action" (DfEE, 1997) repeated some of the language of school development in the earlier document "Planning for School Development" (DES 1989) without any reference to it, as though they were unconnected.

The key issue at all levels has been to make links and connections between what can appear as disparate initiatives into practical focused and solid strategies for school improvement. As the headteacher and senior management team struggle with this problem there is the danger of not doing anything or of putting the wrong bits back together and creating something that was neither intended or will not work.

The headteachers of the twenty-first century need to have the capacity to draw all aspects of management together within a clearly focused set of aims. Making the connections between vision, mission statements, strategic plans, and short term school plans is one thing. Linking to financial and staff development plans, while incorporating school and individual targets and inspection action plans add to the complexity. Indeed, this can be even more difficult when each of these areas is in the hands of a different senior manager, emphasising the need for greater co-ordination, a team approach and involvement.

Given what has been said above about the demands for change in education, two areas might be identified as keys to transformational vision building over the next decade or so. One area is the curriculum being linked with instructional programmes that directly addresses the targets that schools are addressing, the other is the notion of pedagogy and building the capacity of teachers. One of the key issues for preparatory school leadership for the future is how the paradigm of the past can be unlocked and a new paradigm established that builds a system of education which is focused upon continual inclusive change and improvement.

Multiple case studies

My research comprises an exploratory study and five separate but related qualitative case studies. I therefore, refer to it as a multiple case study.

The main aim of this composite study is to acquire greater understanding of pedagogical improvement and its effects upon teachers and classrooms, as well as the school as an organisation. The key proposition of the study is that:

As the schools undergo pedagogical improvement, mutual adaptation (individual teachers, teams of teachers and the whole school culture) occurs, in which the innovative idea, the individual teachers, and the school setting undergo change during implementation. This adaptation and development is due to the capacity building process (integrated professional development that supports the teacher in the classroom) this encourages a sharing and agreement of the value-chains (each individual teacher's values, each subject department's values and the whole school's values – so forming a chain.) within the schools, which can lead to improved standards of teaching, learning and pupil achievement. The final outcome is a distinctive combination of practices that are unique to the school, however, there are principles that could be applied to other schools.

When conducting a multiple case study, it is important to develop a theoretical framework. The framework needs to state the conditions under which a particular phenomenon is likely to be found (a literal replication) and which could become the vehicle for relating emerging pieces of evidence. The exploratory study was carried out in

order to 'bound' the case studies on three levels:

- First boundary: decide on the time line for each case;
- Second boundary: deciding on the people and schools to be involved in each case;
- Third boundary: developing aspects of personal theory and meanings for each case.

This process of bounding the first four case studies then leads to the final study which examined similarities and differences in the experiences of two other schools that had undergone a pedagogical improvement process and allows a thematic analysis, in order to look for hierarchical constructs.

Bassey (1999:56) says, that:

> an important criteria for judging the merit of a case study is the extent to which the details are sufficient and appropriate for a teacher working in a similar situation to relate his/or/her decision-making to that described in the case study. **The relatability is more important than its generalisability.**

Inevitably, where a single researcher is gathering all the information, selection has to be made. The researcher selects the area for study and decides which material to present in the final report. It is difficult to cross-check information and so there is always the danger of distortion. Critics of the case study approach draw attention to this and other problems. They point to the fact that generalisation is not always possible, and question the value of the study of single events.

Denscombe (1998:40) makes the point that 'the extent to which findings from the case study can be generalised to other examples in the class depends on how far the case study example is similar to others of its type', and, drawing on the example of a case study of a small primary school, cautions that

> This means that the researcher must obtain data on the significant features (catchment area, the ethnic origins of the pupils and the amount of staff turnover) for primary schools in general and then demonstrate where the case study example fits in relation to the overall picture.

Bassey (1999:10) holds similar views, but prefers to use the term relatability rather than generalisability. He considers that if case studies are carried out systematically and critically, if they are aimed at the improvement of education, if they are relatable and if by publication of the findings they extend the boundaries of existing knowledge, then they are valid forms of educational research.

A successful study will provide the reader with a three-dimensional picture and will illustrate relationships, micro political issues and patterns of influences in a particular context.

Two sources of evidence provided insights into the management of change and the processes of improving pedagogy. The prime source, was understanding gained from a comprehensive review of the current related theory and research. The second source was the exploratory study. The findings and themes emerging from the exploratory study informed the formulation of the research questions and the design of the study.

The exploratory study aimed to investigate why these schools feel impelled to change and to improve pedagogy. It was believed to be important to understand why the processes, that were to be investigated through the multiple case studies, had arisen, and to provide a context for the embedded multiple case studies.

Six independent preparatory schools are the subjects of the case studies. Four of the schools were examined in depth over a period of years, as they moved through the improvement process. There is a separate case study of each of these four schools.

Each of these case studies are divided into three sections: the first section investigates how that school prepared for the pedagogical improvement, the second section describes and analyses the events as the school moved through the process and the final section examines the outcomes and the impact of the process on the teachers and children. The aim of the first four case studies is to examine, conceptualise and theorise about the experiences of the schools and to analyse their methods for addressing a particular problem or set of problems at each stage of development – before, during and after the improvement process. The fifth case study examines two further independent preparatory schools, and were conducted over a shorter period of time. These two schools have also experienced similar improvement processes. The aim of this final case study is to attempt to validate, verify and relate the findings of the first four case studies, against the experiences of two other schools. It was thought by the researcher that the fifth and final case study could be compared with the other four examples and that similarities and differences may be identified, which could be illuminative.

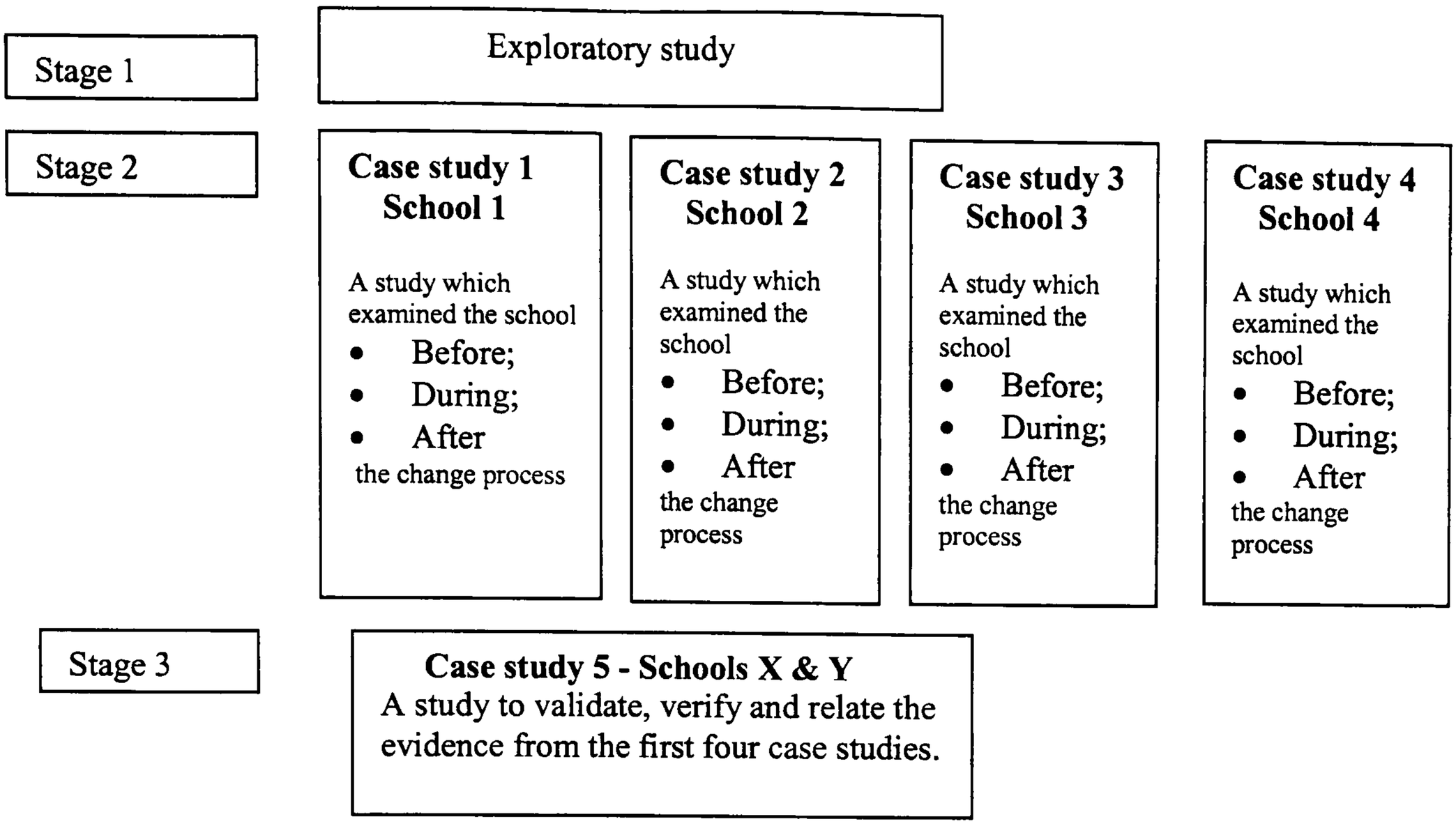

Diagram 1: Illustration of the stages in undertaking the components of the multiple case studies

<u>The research questions are:</u>

- Why do preparatory schools feel impelled to move from the perceived relative stability to relative instability of planned pedagogical improvement?
- Do these independent preparatory schools have the capacity to improve themselves?
- If so, what are the conditions and processes which enable these independent preparatory schools to promote and sustain pedagogical improvement?
- Is it possible to develop a model of the improvement process which illustrates how the process was sustained in some of the school?
- Was the fact that these schools were independent relevant, and if so, why?

Having described how the research was designed, the next section describes how I undertook the research.

3. Research methods

In this section I shall try to show that the methods I used were consistent with the operational characteristics of ethnographic multiple case study research noted in the previous sections. In addition to describing what I did and why, I shall critically review the methods I adopted.

Stage 1: The exploratory study

Case study design can be altered and revised after the initial stages of a study, therefore the exploratory study was intended to examine and explore a range of issues that would assist in the design of the case studies.

> The main purpose of the design is to help to avoid the situation in which the evidence does not address the initial research questions. In this sense, a research design deals with a logical problem and not a logistical problem. (Yin, 1994:37)

The purpose of the exploratory study was essentially heuristic, to develop ideas and research hypotheses rather than to gather facts and statistics. It was concerned with trying to understand how people think and feel about pedagogical improvement and whether and why independent preparatory schools were undertaking this process.

At this initial stage of the research I was enquiring into:

> Whether and why independent preparatory schools feel impelled to move from the perceived relative stability to the relative instability of planned pedagogical improvement?

As this period was primarily concerned with the conceptualisation of the research problem, the first level initially involved lengthy, unstructured interviews with key participants, who were headteachers in both maintained primary and independent preparatory schools who had led their schools through pedagogical improvement.

The second level was where I examined published research on independent preparatory schools from IAPS and ISIS in order to gather general data. The purpose of examining and analysing this data was to gather attitudinal information about whether independent schools were considering or were involved in pedagogical change. This data indicated that a considerable number of schools were embarking upon or involved in school improvement processes generally and pedagogical improvement processes in particular. Therefore, I made the decision to conduct a third level of enquiry.

The third level aspect of the exploratory study was to conduct four in-depth interviews with people involved in preparatory schools at a national level. Appendix 2.2 illustrates the range of questions and the responses asked in each of these interviews.

The primary research practitioner objective during these interviews, was to maintain spontaneity, where I sought to reduce my own role to an absolute minimum to avoid leading the respondents. If something was not clear, a non-directive prompt was used or I maintained an expectant silence. I attempted to note what was said and also to pick up on gaps and hesitations and to explore what was behind them. I tried to create an atmosphere which was sufficiently uncritical for the respondents to come out with seemingly irrational ideas, hatreds or misconceptions. These interviews (except one) were recorded on tape and were analysed in detail afterwards.

It was hoped that the in-depth interviews, with the additional data arising from the unstructured interviews and the published research, would broaden and deepen the plan of research. In fact, the data did reveal new dimensions to be studied, suggested ideas and hypotheses and began to indicate important differences between groups of respondents.

Thus, the exploratory data helped in the formulation of the research design and questions by assisting me in deciding upon a multiple case study approach, the theoretical framework for the conditions under which a particular phenomenon is likely to be found, bounding the case studies on the three levels described earlier in this chapter, the focus, the approach and strategies for each case, the first draft of the research questions and possible data collection and analytical techniques.

The other important factor in undertaking the exploratory study is that although I was engaged in a set of practical activities, I was doing this in the light of a "massive corpus of theoretical understanding" (Winter 1989:28). Theory and practice are not distinct entities which front each other; each contains elements of the other. The purpose of the analytical process was to question the reflective basis on which practical actions had been carried out, to offer a reflexive and dialectical critique whose effect was to recall to mind those possibilities which practice had ignored. The exploratory study was both a practical and theoretical phase, in which theory questioned practice, but also practice questioned theory. Theoretical critiques of practical accounts and events posed questions which recalled forgotten possibilities. But these questions and possibilities can never be completely exhaustive, and so they do not have any absolute or final authority.

"Ultimately, they are produced through personal interactions with practical contexts. For this reason the theoretical critique is itself also open to question" (Winters1989:66).

> Theory and practice do not confront one another in mutual opposition: each is necessary to the other for the continued vitality and development of both. (Winters, 1989:67)

The search for the settings: access and entry.

The exploratory study had enabled me to bound the case studies, by supporting my decisions about the time-line for each case; secondly, deciding on the general type and category of schools that I would be looking for; and thirdly, developing aspects of personal theory and meanings for each case.

Locating six headteachers and schools who were willing to be the subject of the studies was the next step. As a result of the second boundary arising from the exploratory study I identified criteria for selection. These were that each school:

- Was a member of the IAPS with between 150 and 250 children on roll;
- Was non-selective and had pupils from the reception year to year 6;
- Had similar/compatible aims and objectives in their school prospectus;
- Had a headteacher who did not have a full-time teaching commitment;
- Had a headteacher who had worked at the school for a minimum of two years;
- Had been inspected during the last four years;
- Had a planned pedagogical initiative that was about to be introduced and the participants were prepared to have this monitored.

The data arising from the exploratory study enabled me to screen and select a smaller group of schools who met the above criteria. I then visited these schools to discuss the research objectives with the headteacher, chair of governors and all the teachers and teaching/classroom assistants. I believed that it was crucial that the stakeholders were committed to the school's involvement in this research programme, as it was to be a long-term relationship.

This further narrowed the group and eventually six schools were selected to be the topics and units of measurement for the case studies.

Ethical code:

All the headteachers, teachers and governors in each of the schools gave their consent to this investigation. They had been informed of the aims, purposes and likely publication of findings involved in the research and of the potential consequences for them as participants. All the participants were made aware of their right to refuse participation whenever and for whatever reason they wished.

I gave an undertaking of openness, honesty and respect for the rights and interests of the participants and their schools. All the findings will be confidential and anonymous.

A timetable for my visits to the school was agreed for the first few months and circulated to all participants. They were provided with my home telephone number so that they could contact me , in confidence, if they had any concerns about the research.

We also agreed that essential participants from that school would review the draft case study material and reports on their school. The schools, in turn, offered access to:

- all their school documentation;
- attendance at staff and governors meetings and receipt of copies of all minutes of all meetings;
- observe any in-service training;
- observe classrooms;
- scrutinise teachers' planning, assessment records and children's work;
- interview all participants.

I believe that the ethical code and the agreements reached with the schools safeguarded their rights, interests and sensitivities. Their privacy was protected by anonymity and, while the use of tape recorders had been signalled, they knew that they could decide whether or not they wanted them used. Transcripts of interviews would be compiled and returned to them for clearance, as would the eventual case study material relating to their school. I did not feel I was exploiting them, since they knew from the outset that I might gain a further qualification. Indeed we spoke about what might each school could gain by being participants in the study and different agreements and objectives were arrived at with each school. These undertakings and safeguards are in accordance with those adopted by the American Anthropological Association (See Spradley 1980:20-5). Moreover, I was conscious that the building of trust is a developmental task and must begin from the very first contact and continue unabated throughout the term of the enquiry (Lincoln and Guba, 1986:256).

<u>In the field:</u>

In this sub-section, I want to describe how I gathered data for the cases, the sources for the data and the context.

The time spent on the exploratory study, including selecting the settings and gaining access to the first four schools, took twenty-four days during late 1998 and spring term 1999. During the summer term 1999, academic years 1999 - 2000 and 2000 – 2001, I spent fifteen full days in each of the four schools for the first stage of each case study (before the pedagogical improvement), fourteen full days in each school for the middle part of each case study (during the process of pedagogical improvement) and six

full days in each school for the latter part of each school's case study (after the improvement). This was a total of thirty-five days in each of the four schools over a two-year period. For case study five, I spent five days in each of the two schools during the academic year 2001- 2002. The total number of days spent in schools during this research was one hundred and fifteen days. The detailed time plan is in Appendix 9.

The greater proportion of my time in the field was spent as a participant observer. In line with the definition of case study, the enquiry needed to take account of the school as a context for the improvement process and draw upon the staff's perceptions and knowledge.

I was aware of the problem of over-identifying with the respondents and losing the researcher's twin perspectives of his own culture and research outlook (Delamont 1992:34). To avoid feeling complacent, I tried to treat whatever I saw or heard about as anthropologically strange (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983:8). Although I had been a member of the occupational culture and retained close links with primary and preparatory schoolteachers and schools, individual schools are sufficiently idiosyncratic to make one conscious of differences existing amongst them. Moreover, each school's organisational culture is unique (Nias et al., 1989 :181). Therefore, and certainly initially, it was not too great a challenge to regard the schools as strange.

Observation involves a number of dualities: immersion/marginality; becoming part of the school/feeling like a stranger; inside knowledge/outside detachment; the immediate/the reflective. These I think of as options which the researcher can adopt at different times in the fieldwork. Regarding the dualities as options means that the researcher needs to seek

some balance between them. Balance is an important principle during fieldwork. Not only do researchers need to consider the different options open to them, but also they need to take account of the different kinds and sources of data. In addition to my observations, I collected insider's accounts through semi-structured interviews and documentary data. All staff and governors provided insider accounts when I interviewed them to elicit their views on the improvement process and what was happening in their school before, during and after the improvement process. The headteachers and teachers were interviewed three times in the first four schools. The same semi-structured interview schedule was used in each of the four schools, so that the same study could be replicated across the four schools. The semi-structured interview schedule for the middle and latter part of each of the first four case studies was derived from the first schedule and was repeated across the four schools. Examples of the semi-structured interview schedules described above are in Appendix 4 and summaries of the responses of teachers and headteachers during these series of interviews are in Appendices 5, 6 and 7.

The governors, parents and children were surveyed through a questionnaire in these schools. Examples of the surveys and the responses are in Appendix 3.

I believed that it was important to ensure that there was consistency and standardisation in the research tools, methods and approaches across the four schools within each study.

I attempted to ensure that I was able to gather data from observation, interview, questionnaire and documentary evidence. The headteachers of the additional two schools, who were the focus for case study five, were interviewed once, using a simplified version of the semi-structured interview schedule that had been used in the

previous case studies. This was seen as important, in order to ensure replication of the data collection methods, as well as testing the replication of the emerging data.

The headteachers and members of the senior management teams were valuable informants. However, all of the teachers were prepared to be interviewed and provided continuous data and anecdotal comments throughout my time in the schools, as did the governors. Generally, my stance was to avoid an adversarial or advocacy position and to preserve an edifice of neutrality in my language; however, my contact with the headteachers and the senior management teams probably marked me as someone who was acquainted with the leadership's perspectives.

Recording data:

At the end of each day in the field I made extensive field notes and examples from the field notes are to be found in Appendix 8.

If I saw something that caught my attention, I would scribble the essence of it since this was sufficient to enable the events to be recalled later (Delamont, 1992:119). I preferred to make notes in private to avoid looking too much like an observer or an inspector. I overtly took notes during interviews, staff meetings, governors meetings and in-service training days. My aim in making notes was to record as faithful an account of the days observations or interviews as possible, since I knew the research depended on the strength and accuracy of this material (Woods, 1986:45). However, data collection was not unconnected with analysis since, as part of my field notes, I included interpretative asides.

One major problem that I encountered was that some of the teachers in school 2. did not like to be tape recorded and often refused to allow this to happen. Therefore, the validity of the data was possibly impaired by the affective dimension of the data collection. The only remedial action that I could take to ensure the validity of the data was to make extensive notes, which were then checked at length with each person interviewed, before leaving the school. This was a time consuming process and inevitably has an impact on the reliability and validity of the data from school 2.

Other researchers have reported that personal feelings are involved and that there is constant interplay between the personal and emotional on the one hand, and the intellectual on the other (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983:166-7). I found school 2. particularly difficult to deal with, in terms of my own emotions, as I observed the disintegration of relationships leading to the eventual dismissal of the headteacher. Judgements that are based on emotions can colour the recording of the events and I tried to ensure a balance between emotion and observation. While the method is not that of 'objectivity', " researchers need to be disciplined in their subjectivity" (Adelman 1985:42).

Interviews enabled me to test my observations and those of the participants (Stenhouse 1982:226). All interviews were transcribed (whether from tape recordings or notes) and returned to the interviewees for correction and clearance before being filed and then used to develop an initial school report (which was sent to the headteacher to be corrected and cleared) and then a case report was written.

I attempted to ensure construct validity and reliability. Reliability means consistency of

the measure, the possibility of replication or repeatability, and the probability of obtaining the same results again if the measure were to be duplicated. I need to ensure that the measuring instruments will behave in a fashion which is consistent with itself, with a minimum error. If I find differences between responses on the same instrument on two separate occasions, or when applied to two different respondents, I have to be sure that these were 'genuine' differences or changes in the subject of measurement, and not differences which could be attributed to inconsistencies in the measuring instrument or to changes in the attendant conditions. Thus the notion of reliability includes both the characteristics of the instrument and the conditions under which it is administered – both have to be consistent. I will attempt to reduce the error component. However, reliability is never perfect, it is always a matter of degree. The degree of reliability sets limits to the degree of validity possible.

Validity examines whether the question, item or responses, measures what it is supposed to measure.

> Validity is a dangerous word as unless we are continuously alert we are likely to slip into its positivist sense, meaning that our understanding is either generalisable or a correct representation of an external world. (Winter, 1989:36)

As stated in the introduction and earlier in this chapter, I intend to undertake research that is exploratory and illuminative and therefore, need to ensure that the significance of the work is relevant and relatable to other situations. Consequently, I will ensure that there were multiple sources of evidence and to establish a chain of evidence during the data collection. In participant observation, validity indicates the ethnographer's understanding of the meanings of the observed experience. Therefore, to attain a high degree of validity, the observer must repeat observation through prolonged engagement

in the school studied and guard against ethnocentrism and perceptual biases. Further I intend to involve the participants in reconstructing the events recorded, so reducing my perceptual biases. Finally, I will seek to establish that the questions are a well-balanced sample of the content domain to be measured and to use theoretical assumptions from the literature as a check on the evidence.

Analysing the data:

I have already acknowledged that in ethnography the process of data analysis occurs more than once. Analysis began in the pre-fieldwork phase, through reviewing the relevant literature and in the formulation and clarification of the exploratory study, which continued through the data collection into the writing phase. While analysis is on going, it is possible to think of it occurring at several levels. Skrtic (1985;193) suggests there are three levels of analysis. The first level occurs in the field and aids subsequent data collection. Second level analysis takes place as the data are organised, categorised, analysed and interpreted. Third level analysis occurs during the process of writing the case study reports and the discussion chapter. In a general sense these three levels describe the process I adopted for analysing the data.

Level one analysis took the form of the interpretative asides mentioned in the previous subsection. They were speculations and indicated the possible direction of future enquiries (Woods 1986:124). At the end of the fieldwork phase, when data analysis became the dominant activity, these speculations sometimes helped to stimulate ideas for themes that could be sorted and classified into categories. Second level analysis involved immersion in the data, the generation of categories and their validation.. My approach to

analysing and organising the data closely matches the approach Ball (1991) has described. In the next section, I described the process of analysing and organising the data and then argue as to why I worked in this way.

All field notes, transcripts, reports and documents were read and reread. While reading, I made notes trying to trace connections or feel for ideas. From these notes I wrote summaries, which assisted me in sorting and classifying the themes into categories. At that point I was concerned to order the data in a succinct way (Woods 1986:125), since the data were of considerable volume. When I was reading and classifying the descriptions and comments of the subjects, I was not merely sorting data but also looking for the most distinctive characteristic that appeared in those data; that is I was looking for structurally significant differences that clarify how people define some specific portion of their world. I acknowledge that when I singled out one factor I obviously left out others that are contained in the data. The data that are focused upon had to be a function of the issue within the question and the phase of the study. Within this framework, I looked for the most essential and distinctive structural aspects of the relation between the individual and the phenomenon. Leaving other aspects aside, I ended up with categories of description, which though originating from a contextual understanding, are de-contextualised and could prove to be useful in other contexts.

Above all, each category is a potential part of a larger structure in which the category is related to other categories of description. I then refined the data into deeper categories. At this point, I would select quotations that could be used and wrote a summary report for that stage of the case study, which was sent to the school to ensure that it was trustworthy

and valid. This process was repeated for each stage of the case studies. Appendix 1 provides a description of the criteria for the selection of the case study material reported in the text of the thesis and an example from the audit trail for the selection of case study material.

The identification of categories was a central element in the process of analysis (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983: 169). The categories served two purposes. First, they enabled me to cluster the data and organise them. Second, they acted as elements of an emerging structure for the case study.

In addition to emergent ideas, I applied a number of concepts identified in the literature concerned with pedagogical and school improvement (Hopkins 2001, Harris 2002). Firstly, there was the belief of Hopkins (2001) that effective school improvement is a strategy for educational change, that focuses on children's achievement, by modifying classroom practice and adapting the management arrangements within the school, in order to support teaching and learning. I was interested in analysing the conditions and processes for pedagogical improvement in these schools, and wanted to ascertain if this, in turn, could provide the opportunity to harness the energy and processes of educational change in these independent preparatory schools. Secondly, Harris examines the development, implementation and impact of a distributed approach to leadership. This encouraged me to consider whether, and if so, how these independent preparatory schools developed a new set of cultural norms around leadership, based on less hierarchical approaches that supported pedagogical improvement and enabled capacity building to take place.

These acted as sensitising concepts (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983: 180) and made me look again at the data. The categories were constantly refined. Some grew in significance and others diminished to become elements of others or were deleted. Contradictions and negative instances also appeared, and these further helped in the process of clarification (Nias *et al*. 1989: 7). To establish the trustworthiness of the findings, both for myself and others, I sought to triangulate the data, that is, I took steps to validate particular pieces of information against at least one other source and/or method (Lincoln and Guba 1987: 283). I also checked whether inferences being drawn were corroborated by solicited and unsolicited statements, and whether the inferences held over short and long-term temporal cycles. For example, the relationship between the headteacher and teachers in school 2.

Another technique for establishing trustworthiness was participant checking. A first draft of each school's section of each case study was returned to the school for comment. Factual errors were noted and the headteacher's comments were received. The headteacher's acceptance of the case study materials helped me in feeling secure with the ideas and findings. Although this could be challenged as simply checking the report against the school's view point, I believe that I was responding appropriately with the canons of qualitative research where the outcomes and interpretations are negotiated with the human sources from which the data have been drawn. Further, each case study is a whole study that has been replicated and where the summary report indicates how and why a particular proposition was demonstrated or not and to ensure that there was not a reliance upon any single source.

As I also discussed in an earlier section of this chapter, I also wanted to ascertain if the findings were relatable to the experience of the teachers and headteachers within the schools. As within this study, I have made the decision that relatability is more important than generalisability, for the reasons described earlier in this chapter.

Throughout the process of constructing and drafting the case studies, analysis continued, as I compared summary reports and case study reports. Ideas were jettisoned either because they could not be validated from more than one source, or because there was the possibility of inference or because there was the need to remain focused on the research questions or phase of the study. Several early attempts to find a structure were discarded, due to the volume of the data. Also, the ongoing process of sifting and checking produced a distillation (Woods 1986: 121) of concepts. Yet the development of the case studies was not lacking in direction, despite the occasional backtracking and revision of the findings.

The case studies are analytic descriptions of the improvement process in a group of schools. While the aim of ethnography is to provide a holistic picture of a way of life (Peacock 1986:18-19), such holism is an impossible ideal since the researcher cannot see everything and must select and emphasise. By regarding the case studies as analytic descriptions, I hope to make it plain that the case studies are a selection from and an interpretation of the processes that these schools were experiencing and could relate to, from both the perspective of the schools and my own desire to provide explanations that are grounded in the particular cases.

I undertook the research with two broad aims. Firstly, to test the validity of the

theoretical framework for pedagogical and school improvement, based on the thinking of Hopkins, Harris and Barth, which I described in the introduction and discussed in the review of literature. Secondly, to examine and analyse the process of change and pedagogical improvement in independent preparatory schools. I regard this ethnographic study as both exploratory and illuminative, as it examines events in a group of schools in a sector where there is little published or unpublished systematic data, it also focuses on the dynamics of schools and classrooms in terms of teaching and learning as part of a pedagogical discourse, rather than examine a narrow focus of discrete teaching activity and finally it considers the relevance of some current theories. Ethnography can explore, find tentative explanations and suggest resolutions to the cases studied. This can contribute to deepen the analysis and ensure that the studies are not mere description. While I have been concerned with representing the cases, description has been enriched by the application of theory during the process of analysis, therefore, I believe that I have delved below surface appearances and deepened understanding.

The findings about the importance of capacity building through the two phases of professional development, in order to develop and deepen teacher's values plus the influence of this on classrooms and schools, were ones that I reflected on at length. I appreciated that the data were themselves constructions (Lincoln and Guba 1985: 332) and that I may have mediated them so that they were unconsciously tailored to match my propositions. This made me question my integrity as a researcher. I examined the data carefully and was satisfied with the internal validity of the multiple case study. Moreover, I was reassured that it was a picture, which the six

headteachers could relate to.

After much scrutiny, I believe that my reconstruction of the processes and experiences in these schools is faithful and credible as I can demonstrate a prolonged period of engagement and evidence of engagement in persistent observation, I have also triangulated by using different sources and methods and have attempted to guard against becoming complacent or too closely identified with the subjects and having premature closure.

Writing the case study

I have already said that writing is a third level of the process of analysis. However, I have chosen to separate the writing of the case studies from the previous sub-section because I want specifically to focus on it.

In the previous section I defined what I take case study to mean, I have described it as an analytic description and acknowledged that it is an interpretative presentation of the case. The case study reports are the best means for summarising the data and displaying them for review. In addition, a case study seeks to offer a measure of vicarious experience for the reader. It is a description of the context of the case and is a vehicle for demonstrating the interplay between inquirer and respondents.

The case studies offer a view of the life within these schools but each one is also a translation of the processes that the subjects were experiencing. As such the accounts are congruent with the nature of ethnography and naturalistic enquiry as set out in the first section of this chapter.

The process of writing the five case studies was challenging, as I was dealing with both description and interpretation. Handling both description and interpretation at the same time meant that there was a need to resolve structural issues, such as the organisation of illustrative data and the integration of analytic and interpretative comments. Each phase of the improvement process is detailed in each of the case studies and the fifth study examines the possibility of replicating and relating the findings to the experiences of other independent schools.

The discussion chapter is not part of the multiple case study but explores the emerging themes against literature. Barth's (1990) assumptions are used to structure this chapter.

As I resolved these problems of structure, I was also trying to deal with the issue of how to approach ethnographic and case study writing. I found little guidance in the literature, as most of the research literature appears to be focused on data collection methods and to issues of validation. Therefore, there has been a tendency to rely upon Winters (1989), Wolcott (1990), Woods (1986). The case studies are a narrative of the everyday experiences (Richardson 1990: 20-1) of these schools, that are typical of the independent preparatory sector and perhaps typical of many maintained primary schools, as they focus on people, the culture of the schools and pedagogy.

4. Rigour in case study research

Those operating from a case study research perspective argue that their strategies are academically rigorous but that definitions of rigour taken from scientific methodology are inappropriate and that concepts such as validity must be viewed differently in such

research. (Yin, 1989:43). Validity and reliability of research are crucial in all social research regardless of disciplines and the methods employed. Collected data must be accurate, authentic and represent reality. Also, intersubjective replicability of research enables investigators to produce cumulative findings. In considering whether my data meets the above objectives. I acknowledge that there were some difficulties during data collection in school 2. however, I will consider these issues of rigour below.

Ethnographic validity refers to the degree to which participant observation achieves what it purports to discover. i.e. the authentic representation of what is happening in a social situation. I believe that my prolonged engagement with the schools, the relationship of trust, openness and honesty and the participant checking have contributed to ensuring that the case study summaries and the text of the thesis provide an authentic and accurate representation of the events in those schools at the time of the research.

Ethnographic reliability refers to the repeatability of a given study by researchers other than the original participant observer; the extent to which independent researchers discover the same phenomena in comparable situations. It is the reliability of ethnographic research (and validity to a degree) that, more often than not, is criticised.

In participant observation, validity indicates the ethnographer's understanding of the meanings of the observed socio-cultural experience, Therefore, to attain a high degree of validity, I have repeated observations through a prolonged involvement with the schools studied. As a participant observer I have attempted to maintain neutrality and yet still observe and interact with the research participants. I achieved this by focusing on each school and a wide range of informants representing the school. I have also attempted

to safe guard against ethnocentrism and perceptual biases, by involving the participants in reconstructing the events recorded by myself. This contributes to reducing my perceptual biases.

Measures to enhance reliability, on the other hand, involve a complete description of the research process, so that independent researchers may replicate the same procedures in comparable settings. In order to achieve this I have provided a delineation of the physical, cultural and social contexts of the study; a statement of my role as an ethnographer in the research setting and an accurate description of the methods of data collection and analysis. I have attempted to take measures to insure internal reliability by using low inference description and confirmation of the findings by the informants.

I will therefore conclude this section by returning to my own research questions, discussing the processes involved in my enquiry, the outcomes of it and the ways in which I have endeavoured to make public and validate my research.

<u>My enquiry: processes, outcomes, making public and validating</u>

The rationale for my enquiry was the improvement of my own and others' understanding and practice. The issue on which I focused was pedagogical improvement in independent schools. When I began my investigation, I was aware that, while there had been a great deal of research into school improvement generally, there had been little or no research into what was happening in independent schools. In addition, there had been little attention given to pedagogical improvement generally and in independent schools specifically.

I did not therefore begin the research with a specific problem or solution but with an area of concern. Schon's (1983:24) comment that "the situations of practice are not problems to be solved but problematic situations characterised by uncertainty, disorder and indeterminacy" held meaning for me. I needed to define the problem before I could take action. I was also aware that I was working within a " fast changing context, one involving complexity, uncertainty, instability, uniqueness and value conflicts." I faced what Hopkins (1985: 62) scribes as a "myriad of contextual variables"

I therefore needed to choose a methodology which would assist me in the process of exploring and improving my own and others' understanding and practice. My research needed to be grounded in reflection of what was happening in this small group of schools. My role would not be that of an 'objective' 'outside' observer, but that of a participant in my enquiry. The research would not take place on what Schon (1983:71) describes as the "high, hard ground' but in the swampy lowlands of others' practice.

Thus positivist approaches involving the use of controlled experimentation and testing and concentrating on quantitative data were not appropriate. My intention was not to develop hypotheses, neither about an observed reality nor to generate conclusions which could be generalised to other contexts, but to gain insights and understanding concerning the practice that I would observe. Although the research would not be generalisable in the positivist sense it would perhaps have applicability and could be relatable to other contexts, thus adding to what Brown and Ritchie (1991:29) refer to as the "body of tentative knowledge".

At the start of my research I undertook an exploratory study in order to investigate the

issues, problems and developments that were happening in terms of school improvement in general and pedagogical improvement in particular, in independent preparatory schools. This first stage enabled me to design the case studies by 'bounding each level of the case'.

I have already described how I selected the schools for the cases and negotiated entry and access.

The second stage was to undertake five case studies to examine six schools during the process of pedagogical improvement – before, during and after. Four of these schools were examined in-depth.

In the last stage of my research, I retrospectively reflected on the whole of my enquiry critically, considering issues relating to pedagogical improvement in these independent preparatory schools, considering the findings and contemplating the implications of my research for these schools.

The enquiry process has resulted in a variety of research related outcomes. These have included: reflective journals, accounts of interviews with teachers, headteachers, governors and parents, questionnaire responses from governors, parents, pupils and headteachers, working papers, and an article on pedagogical improvement in independent preparatory schools.

The reflective journals detail the ongoing systematic and rigorous nature of the cyclical process of reflection, planning and action which I employed throughout each cycle of my enquiry. An example from the journal is included in Appendix 8 and an explanation and

reflection on the criteria for the selection of case study material reported in the text is in Appendix 1.

After consideration of issues relating to the use of interviews in enquiries, I sent each interviewee a copy of the questions, arising from my exploration of my own and others' practice, to allow time for reflection concerning their perception prior to the interview. Each interview lasted between one and two hours and was carried out in a quiet, undisturbed area. If the interviews had been taped, I listened to each tape twice, categorising responses under issue headings and recording where there appeared to be inconsistencies and dilemmas. I then produced an account of each interview. When I had interviewed everyone in that school, I considered all their responses, exploring similarities and differences in relation to each issues.

Bearing in mind issues raised in relation to the creation and use of questionnaires, I produced first drafts utilising a mixture of closed and open questions to explore the views of governors and parents. These were trialled and discussed with a seventh school. I requested feedback, on for example: the appropriateness of the questions, the language used and the layout of the questionnaire. The questionnaires were the amended and checked with them again before being piloted further and altered yet again.

In addition to the reflective journals, interview accounts and questionnaire responses, other research related outcomes have included working papers exploring my reflections on the processes involved in the research and my findings.

Throughout the research I have endeavoured to make my "systematic enquiry… public"

(Stenhouse 1980: 32) and validate both the processes involved and my findings. I have tried to ensure that my description and explanation of my own development and changing understanding over time is 'authentic', that is, that I have expressed my intentions truthfully. Thus I have discussed issues relating to school improvement, pedagogy, capacity building, values and culture with colleagues on an ongoing basis and sought their views and feedback in relation to my effectiveness in supporting understanding of these processes. In addition, I asked the colleagues, with whom I worked during the stages, to read and comment on my accounts of the research process. My intention was to minimise bias and to ensure that my account offered a true reflection of the process, events and outcomes discussed.

In order to ensure that I presented a accurate reflection of the views expressed by the headteachers and teachers of the six schools, I employed the following strategies. After gaining their permission and indicating that the views they expressed would not be attributed to them without their agreement, I taped the interviews (when allowed) producing a written account of each. Every interviewee received two copies of their account and was asked to return a signed copy if they agreed that it provided a true record of the discussion. All returned copies with some making minor amendments which I noted. I then produced a summary of their views and circulated it to all those who had taken part asking for their comment. I also sent the questionnaire responses from each individual to the school involved and discussed these with them.

In my enquiry, I have, therefore, considered 'the multiplicity of viewpoints" (Winter 1989:43) of those involved, using a similar triangulation technique to that originally

proposed by Elliott and discussed by Hopkins (1985:22) to explore similarities and differences between my own, colleagues', and the schools' perceptions of the process.

I consider that the strategies I employed to substantiate the accounts of the respondents allow me to claim that I have accurately represented their stated perceptions of pedagogical improvement in these independent preparatory schools at that time.

5. Research and the researcher's development

As I have undertaken this research, I have learned that fieldwork is personally and emotionally taxing and is not a smooth process. The changing and evolving relationships and circumstances within the schools occasionally made the fieldwork difficult to complete, but also made me aware of the professional generosity that was accorded to me. For instance, the experiences and happenings within school 2. meant that there were issues that I was asked not to investigate or to mention to the staff. This was further exacerbated by the complex and professionally sensitive triangular relationship between the headteacher, who was eventually dismissed, and her successor and myself; during the difficult period of case study 2., when K had become a member of the teaching staff and the senior master had become headteacher. In retrospect I am surprised that the school was prepared to continue to be involved with the research project and am grateful for their honesty and openness at such a difficult time.

Secondly, my principal aim in undertaking this study was to improve my understanding of school and pedagogical improvement. I realise now, on reflection that it was important that I was very committed to this, as ethnography is a difficult and demanding form of enquiry. The demands of collecting data, handling the analysis and writing up

demand an emotional attachment to the project as well as the subject.

Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, I have learned that I might have improved on the way I conducted the research. With hindsight, I now believe that I could have persuaded the teachers to have reconsidered their decision not to allow the interviews to be tape-recorded, as I developed my relationship with them and they began to trust me. I believe that their original decision was related to how I negotiated access and entry to the schools. In being enthusiastic and keen to gain entry, I may have actually given too much "power and control" to the subjects, particularly as I was concerned that their wishes were respected and that the ethics of the study were acceptable to all involved..

Another aspect to improving the data collection was that I sometimes chose inappropriate courses of action, as I was a learner in the process. I therefore believe that it may have been more appropriate to have included the last two schools (involved in case study five) on the same level and depth as the first four case studies.

Decisions were made in good faith at the time of collecting the data; as I developed and gained experience in the field I recognise that some aspects might have been improved.

Summary

The thesis is a summary of the research process, the issues I have investigated and the values I hold. It synthesises and integrates my systematic analysis of my own learning and educational development.

Within this thesis I consider that I have made an original contribution to educational knowledge and theory through my analysis of my own education practice, as I have

sought to contribute to the understanding of pedagogical improvement and capacity building in independent preparatory schools.

This chapter has examined why I chose to undertake an ethnographic investigation and to use case study. It has also explained how I have designed, structured, adapted and conducted the research process. The next chapter contains the exploratory study and the five case studies. The case studies describe, analyse and conceptualise the essence of the interactional processes that the six schools experienced before, during and after implementing a process of planned pedagogical improvement.

Understanding the Processes and Outcomes of Planned Pedagogical Improvement in Independent Preparatory Schools

Chapter 4: The Case Studies

This chapter contains the summary reports of the evidence from the exploratory study and the five case studies. The purpose of the exploratory study was to ascertain why independent preparatory schools embark upon significant pedagogical improvement, and to investigate the external and internal factors and influences that are critical in shaping and forming the decisions that these schools make. The first four case studies examine and analyse the essence of the interactional processes that the four independent preparatory schools experienced before, during and after implementing a planned pedagogical improvement process. The fifth study considers the planned pedagogical improvement process in two further schools. The purpose of examining these two schools was to ascertain if the evidence emerging from the first four case studies could be related to the experience of other schools, in a meaningful way. The research design, questions and methods were described in the previous chapter.

EXPLORATORY STUDY:

Why do Preparatory Schools feel impelled to move from relative stability to the relative instability of planned change?

In order to select the schools for the case studies, an exploratory study was undertaken. The purpose was to ascertain why independent preparatory schools embark upon significant pedagogical improvement, and to investigate the external and internal factors and influences that are critical in shaping and forming the decisions that these schools make.

The exploratory study used a range of evidence, which included survey data from the

Independent Schools Information Service (ISIS), a survey of the headteachers who were members of the Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools (IAPS), a survey of independent school governors, a survey of independent school parents and four specialist interviews. The specialist interviews were with the Chairman, the General Secretary and the Director of Education of the IAPS and the General Secretary of the National Association of Headteachers (NAHT).

The survey of the IAPS headteachers showed that a feature of most preparatory schools, is their view that parents have a profound influence on the school's culture. They are aware that most parents appreciate academic success and other spheres of the school's activities; are demanding and conscious of their children's rights and are prepared to exert pressures on the school and expect the very best for their children.

In 1998 according to the Independent Schools Information Service (ISIS) figures, some 2,167 prep. school pupils moved to maintained secondary schools – 13.0 % of those moving to maintained secondary schools. In 2000, 2,329 prep. school pupils left for maintained secondary schools – 14.8 % of the leaving group of pupils.

According to ISIS and the beliefs of the IAPS headteachers, one of the most striking reasons for the popularity of preparatory schools is the fact that they are generally non-selective and that there is an emphasis not just on basic skills, but on the wider curriculum. In 2001, the key stage two national test results from 200 preparatory schools showed that 90 % of pupils reached the expected standard in English and mathematics, compared with averages of 65% and 59% in the maintained sector.

The ISIS survey of preparatory schools showed that pupils receive more than 100 hours per year of extra teaching than the typical maintained primary school pupil,

with more than half of their lessons taught by teachers with specialist subject knowledge. The breadth of the curriculum was demonstrated by the fact that virtually all schools teach French (98.9%), two thirds teach Latin (66.8%) and one in six offer Greek (16.5%). There was also a view (45% of preparatory school headteachers) that their breadth of curriculum, the opportunity for children to take part in a wide range of sporting activities, music and extra curricular activities, is an attraction to parents and pupils when compared to the maintained sector.

The majority of preparatory headteachers surveyed did not feel antagonistic to the educational changes introduced by central government, such as school development planning, the publication of league tables, marketing of schools and parental choice. In fact, many of the headteachers believed that they had been successfully working in these domains for some time. They believe that they have the self-confidence and familiarity with high levels of performance that enable them to reflect on the wider goals of education and to focus a substantial part of its energies on lower and higher achieving pupils.

The preparatory schools' history and nature of relationships with the parent body bestow real advantages as well as disadvantages, as there is recognition that in order to remain competitive and manage the market pressures, they need to focus on improving the teaching and learning processes and the conditions which support it, rather than school organisational or presentational structures. The vast majority of headteachers in the survey (96%) believe that they have developed effective organisational structures , which enable them to provide a broad curriculum, balanced against the advantages of specialist teaching. They also believe that they have immense expertise, experience and skill in presenting and marketing their unique

strengths to the public at large and parents in particular. However, their recent pre-occupation has been the development of the strategies for improving the schools' capacity for providing quality of education in times of change. Therefore, many of the IAPS headteachers are involved in educational change that enhances pupil's outcomes as well as strengthening their schools capacity for change.

The exploratory study revealed that there was consensus about the key factors that have affected independent preparatory schools, and that these were:

External influences:

- Parental expectations;
- Governors;
- Independent schools inspection services;
- Government changes to the curriculum, assessment and examinations at a national level;
- Competition with other schools – including those in the maintained sector.

<u>Parents:</u>

The survey of parents provided the evidence that the majority of parents are "first time buyers," with no previous experience of independent school education but a wealth of experience (both positive and negative) of maintained sector education.

Those parents who completed the questionnaire (61%), cited higher educational standards as the main reason for their preference, with smaller classes, better life chances, better discipline, more teacher support, and better results also being cited by a significant number of parents when compared to the maintained sector .

The survey also revealed that most parents (52%) would have sent their children to a

State primary school in the past, allowing them more time to save up for the fees of a private secondary school which would prepare their children for entry to a top university. But parents are now reversing this trend The survey shows that the parents believe that "education instilled at a young age lasts longer" and 63% are now viewing preparatory school education as an " investment in the future." Another reason for the rising popularity of preparatory schools is the ways in which parents view some of the maintained schools. One parent said:

> The elite selective state schools, cost nothing and judging by their performance at GCSE and A level league tables, are rivalling many private academies. However, these selective state schools are difficult to enter, therefore, we are prepared to send our children to prep schools as a preparation for the 11 plus exam set by selective grammar schools. Parent: School 1.

Many of those parents, (65%) had a minimum expectation that preparatory schools should be able to offer the same as the very best of maintained schools with smaller classes. (The average Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) in maintained schools was 23.4:1 in 1997, with some schools having over 30 children in a class and some much lower.)

Parents also cited the broader curriculum, the wide range of extra-curricular activities and highly effective teaching as reasons for their choice of school. Almost without exception, they stated that they are expecting "results." Consequently, many of the headteachers realise that alongside the good facilities and high level teacher-pupil ratio, they need to focus on teaching, learning, pupil progress and achievement, in order to survive. This strategy requires planned change.

The parental views and opinions can have a dramatic effect on the school roll. If a pattern of parental discontent leads to children being removed from a school, the outcome for the school staff and governors can be financially, and therefore educationally, disastrous. Governing bodies often fear failing or appearing to fail, as the financial ramifications and outcomes can be considerable. This means that the

parental voice is carefully listened to and acted upon by governors and headteachers. This is the "customer driven" market, which is highly competitive.

Many parents talked of their determination to bring about curriculum change. The majority believed that their school was not competitive with their local maintained primary school or other local prep. schools. The majority of the parents wanted to receive the same basic level of education, that the local maintained school offered, plus smaller classes, a wider curriculum, an emphasis on sports and music and the opportunity to gain places at independent senior schools or maintained secondary schools of national status. Those parents who did not hold this view, were either ignored as they were a minority or they withdrew their children.

<u>Governors:</u>

Governors are charity trustees within the meaning of the Charities Act 1993.

> Whether or not incorporated, they accept personal liability in the event of a breach of trust or other wilful default or in the event of loss being caused to the charity by acting beyond the powers given to them in the governing instrument.
>
> If unincorporated, they also accept that they will personally sue or be sued and will hold the land and investments (unless the land is held by the Official Custodian or stock trustees). They also are personally liable and vicariously liable (subsequent to indemnity from the assets of the charity, if sufficient) for all contracts, torts and offences of non-compliance by the governors and in their name.
>
> S97(i) Charities Act 1993.

The role of the governors is to protect and manage the assets and to set or ratify policies. The role of the headteacher is to run the school and account to the governors.

The survey of the governors revealed that they saw a dividing line between their responsibilities to the school and accountability to staff and parents. They believed that parents are consumers and customers but they are customers with a difference. The parents are not buying a one-off commodity but are buying into a set of relationships which may last from one school term or up to twelve years. As an experienced chair of governors said, "The parents are buying into a vision for the

future for their children and may want to play an active part in managing that."

Thus, the governors saw that there is an inevitable tension between the right, the need, and the wish of parents to know and be involved, which may be in conflict with the needs of the school. One newly appointed governor said;

> I have found that it takes considerable political skill and firmness to regulate the relationships, however, it is inevitable that we will be influenced by parental wishes and so place pressure on our headteacher to meet these wishes. The ultimate power lies in the hands of the parents, who can withdraw their children." Governor: School 3.

All of the governors who were surveyed believed that those who have power must exercise it responsibly and for the benefit of the school community, respecting the responsibilities and the legal and moral constraints under which governors are bound to conduct the business of the charity and the school.

<u>Inspection:</u>

The introduction of the independent schools inspection service, in 1995, has also led to some changes taking place. The schools recognised their accountability and naturally wished to derive as much assistance and advice from the inspection findings as possible. However, the fact that the report is published to the parents, who are now able to have access to information about their own school and are able to make comparisons between similar schools, has caused the governors to monitor and evaluate what is happening in their school. This is a new phenomenon and would not have been seen as part of the governor's role in the past. There is now a focus upon the quality of teaching, leaning and standards of pupil achievement that would have been totally unacceptable and indeed, seen as unimportant by governing bodies ten years ago.

A further development is that, this in turn has led to a greater sense of accountability

of headteachers to their governors and teachers to the headteacher. According to the headteachers, the isolated, seemingly traditional, idiosyncratic and unique practises that occurred in many classrooms or schools are now viewed as unacceptable within these four schools. A majority of headteachers highlighted the drive towards consistency in expectations of teaching, staff behaviour, standards of teaching, and a demand, by parents, for pupils to perform well in all aspects of school life.

Internal Factors

- Greater numbers of teachers being employed from the maintained sector;
- The need to recruit and retain teachers;
- Appraisal, performance management and continuous professional development of teachers;
- Competence and capability of staff.

<u>Teachers:</u>

At the same time that governors are reacting to external forces, there are also internal forces beginning to make an impact upon the schools. In the past it was rare that teachers would move from the maintained sector into the independent sector and vice versa. However, because many preparatory schools were following the National Curriculum and involved in the national tests at the end of Key Stages One and Two, there had been greater movement of teachers from the maintained sector into independent preparatory schools. The following views were found in the ISIS survey data. (None of these schools were involved in the case study research):

> In the past, the school had relied on school-minded teachers whose ambition was to work with children in their preferred subject or age group and who rarely moved onto other schools. There has been no movement of staff for nine years.
>
> (KS1 teacher – Prep school in Birmingham)

> We rarely have teachers leaving the school, other than if they are pregnant or their spouse – usually the husband, is leaving the area. We are a stable staff and there have been no new appointments for six years, until this last year.
>
> (Deputy head of a Prep school in Newcastle)

I feel that the school has been very stable and settled, we have all worked together for a long time now and there was little need to discuss what we taught or how we taught, as we just know each other and the children. However, this has changed recently with the appointment of two new members of staff from state schools.

(English co-ordinator at a Prep school in Berkshire)

Our school has never been stable. People have always come and gone and it has often been difficult to keep up the façade"

(long-serving member of staff at a Prep school in Nottinghamshire)

Some of the staff surveyed thought that their school had altered because of new teachers from the maintained sector joining.

The school had been very traditional and conventional. I found it difficult when I first came here, from an Infant school in Lambeth. But as time has gone by, I think that I have been accepted. The new headteacher's appointment has made a great deal of difference, as has the appointment of other members of staff. The place just feels different as we now talk more about the children and what we are doing. I even spoke about my approach to teaching reading recently and my beliefs.

(Year 3 teacher at a Prep school in London)

The new staff who have joined us have brought fresh and different ideas and approaches, which is what we needed. However, it is difficult to change things in a school like this. You cannot expect people who have worked here for many years or maybe only ever worked here, to change overnight or to adopt new ideas and thinking.

(Deputy head at a Prep school in Somerset)

Summary

The evidence from the exploratory study suggests that there are a range of reasons as to why preparatory schools feel impelled to move from the perceived relative instability to the relative instability of planned change. There is a strong drive from many of the governors for efficiency in terms of the management of the school. Although this does not necessarily translate into a catalyst for change and improvement, there is evidence from the surveys and the interviews that there was a keen recognition of the need to maintain or increase pupil numbers. In order to achieve this many of the governors reacted positively to the parental demands. Secondly, there is an overwhelming interest in effectiveness, in terms of measuring successful academic outcomes, by governors and parents. Thirdly, the need for productivity by meeting market requirements and finally, schools developing

understanding of their responsibility and accountability to parents, caused by the statutory requirement to introduce parent/school contracts.

Preparatory schools have always had to operate in a competitive business world, however, the exploratory study revealed that during the last fifteen years the major changes to the curriculum, assessment and the examination processes at a national level in maintained schools, coupled with the technological revolution and the increasing focus on legal accountability, has forced independent schools to undertake planned change.

The challenge for preparatory schools is not just the management of planned improvement but also how to sustain the improvements and ensure that they become embedded into the school's history, traditions and culture. For the first time, many of the headteachers had become actively involved in developing and improving the quality of teaching and learning.

THE CASE STUDIES

Introduction

The purpose of the case studies is to unravel the processes that were taking place in the schools and to attempt to bring a first level of clarity, in order to begin to understand the complex process of improvement.

The case studies began with a survey of the views of the governors, parents and pupils associated with the first four schools. (See Appendix 3). The six headteachers and all of the teachers in the first four schools were interviewed, school documentation was scrutinised and the researcher spent time in the schools observing the preparations for the planned change, during the planned change process and then revisited the schools some time after the full implementation of the change.

Each of the first four case studies are sub-divided into three sections – before, during and after the planned pedagogical change.

CASE STUDY ONE

Introduction

School 1 is situated in a leafy suburb, south of London. The school was founded in 1908. It is housed in attractive Edwardian buildings in pleasant surroundings. The gardens and playing areas are landscaped and surrounded by high fences and hedges. A school caretaker and his wife live on the site and care for it as if it is their own home. The external and internal decorations and fabric of the building are of a high standard. Many of the rooms on the ground floor have high ceilings, highly polished wooden block floors and the original fittings. French doors open onto terraces and patios. The rooms on the first floor are smaller and difficult to organise as classrooms, as these were originally the bedrooms. However, they are well organised, brightly decorated with displays of children's work that are colourful and carefully mounted. In addition, a self-contained two-room nursery unit, science room, art and design studio, a design technology area, ICT suite, music room and new reception/office area have been built in the last five years. All of the specialist subject areas are well equipped. There is a large library.

There are future plans to improve the staff room and lavatories and to refurbish the classrooms on the upper floor of the main building in the next three years. There is a rolling programme for redecoration and refurbishment throughout the school for the next five years.

The school has extensive playing fields and outdoor hard surfaces for PE and games, however, all indoor PE has to take place in the hall, which is also used for assembly, dance, drama, school productions and as a dining hall.

The school uses the National Curriculum and there is subject specialist teaching for

music, science, design technology, PE and French from year one onwards.

The school community

The school caters for 198 pupils, aged 3 to 11 years with 16 teachers and a headteacher. There are also four classroom assistants, one after school care assistant, (as the school offers and extended day from 08.00 to 18.00), a secretary, caretaker, clearer and two dining assistants. The local independent senior school provides additional bursar support and cooked school lunches, as the two schools share linked governing bodies.)

There are fourteen governors. The governing body is now organised on a committee structure. This was introduced in 1998. The governors have a strategic school development plan for the next ten years, which was devised in 1995. They have increased the feeds by 23% over the last five years. The fees are structured to be in the middle of the prep school fee band. They also sold a plot of land to finance the building programme.

The headteacher had been appointed six years ago with the clear brief to develop and improve the school. She had taught in both the maintained and independent sectors. She was in her mid-forties on appointment and had not worked at the school before. Fifty percent of the teachers have been appointed to the school within the past three years. Teachers resigning, retiring or seeking other appointments caused this beyond this school. This was the first major change in staffing to have happened to the school. It was a deliberate policy, carried out and implemented by the headteacher. She wanted to bring in "new blood" and to make appointments that would support the school development plan.

When the headteacher was appointed, the school was suffering from falling rolls – the numbers were down to 87 children. The governors had been were anxious about the growing parental demands, and negative views and perceptions of the school. This was caused because the parents believed that the school was not meeting the needs of pupils in terms of offering a modern curriculum or facilitates and that the standards of teaching were poor, in comparison to other local independent preparatory schools.

In an interview with the chair of governors, he stated that the governors did not see themselves as victims of change but believed that they were controlling the process, by responding to market forces. By using the demands of external change as a stimulus, they were hoping to enhance pupil outcomes through specific changes in teaching approaches and the curriculum, and through strengthening the school's organisational ability to support the work of teachers. They accepted that educational change is necessary, within the ethos, values and traditions of the school; but that this should be planned educational change. They placed an emphasis on strategies for strengthening the school's capacity for managing change, which would raise student achievement and specifically focused on the teaching and learning process by appointing an "appropriately minded and experienced new headteacher." The governors believed that the implementation of the changes would be incremental and controlled and thought that the traditional hierarchical management structure, where the headteacher introduced and led the changes through "programmed implementation would suffice." What they had not taken into consideration is that effective implementation of planned change relies on the active involvement of staff at each stage of the process, otherwise the change will never become fully operational and incorporated into everyday practice.

The pedagogical improvement plan focused on the introduction and appointment of subject co-ordinators who would take responsibility for monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement. The headteacher believed that this would enable the school to improve the standards of teaching and learning.

Before the planned pedagogical improvement

The headteacher saw her core task was to change and improve the school. During the initial an interview the headteacher said:

> Parents were dissatisfied with what they perceived to be low standards, poor facilities and poor teaching. The previous headteacher had been in post for 17 years and had found the changes that the parents expected to be too daunting for her to implement
>
> (Head teacher of School 1)

One parent said:

> This was a cosy little school, which didn't achieve much.
>
> (Parent of year 4 child in School 1)

A long-serving teacher said:

> The school had had one previous inspection in 1991, The previous headteacher had written some limited documentation, curriculum plans and policies, which we used during the inspection week. We were all appointed to teach a particular subject or age group. I don't remember any discussion on the curriculum, teaching and learning. We had one staff meeting a year. I suppose that the downside was that we worked in isolation and were expected to be responsible for what happened in our own classroom, but somehow that didn't seem wrong then. Teachers enjoyed working here and few demands were made on us. We knew the school was in trouble, because of the falling numbers. We also knew that things would change with a new headteacher. (Year 6 teacher in School 1)

The chair of governors said:

> Just after M (the headteacher) was appointed, the numbers of pupils dropped to below 50 children. The school was in a poor state of repair and there had been no purchases of any kind for two years. M was given the job of rescuing the school and making changes, so that it could survive in a very competitive market place. We have complete faith in M and really left her to get on with the task. The only direction that we gave her was to increase pupil numbers, improve the standard of the buildings, teaching, learning and pupil achievement.
>
> (Chair of governors – School 1)

He added,

> No, we had no involvement in the early stages. We just received termly reports from M and discussed how we could finance her plans. It was in 1999 when she suggested that we should have a strategic plan for the school, that we began to meet with the senior management team and to receive reports from other members of staff. I suppose these changes happened because of M and I'm ashamed to say, that we only reluctantly complied. (Chair of governors)

The headteacher said:

> The initial cause of change was survival. The immediate changes and measures that had to be taken were changes and improvements to the buildings, resources, the school image, communications and relationships with the parents. I think the staff supported these.
>
> (Headteacher of School 1)

The consequence of these initial changes were:

> I began to realise that in order to achieve my target of improving the quality of teaching and learning, I had to move beyond the fabric of the school, so I asked the staff to make changes to the way in which they planned and to begin to write curriculum policies and schemes of work.
>
> Yes, it wasn't planned as such, it just seemed the next logical thing to do and I didn't expect the problems that it caused.
>
> (Headteacher of School 1)

The unplanned changes that were made were the introduction of long term planning and medium term curriculum planning, the development of curriculum policies and schemes of work and the introduction of staff appraisal for the headteacher.

> These were dark days. Quite a few of use wouldn't talk to M. I felt very unhappy and I'm sure that other people did as well. We didn't like the extra work and found all this documentation was difficult to produce. It was so different to how we had worked before.
>
> (Music co-ordinator and long serving member of staff)

> We were all pleased with the changes to the buildings and everything, but hadn't realised that there would also be changes in the way that we worked. It was a bit of a shock and I remember feeling really upset about what we were being asked to do.
>
> (Nursery teacher and long serving member of staff)

> With hindsight, I did not introduce the changes properly and I suppose that I thought that the staff would see the reasons for the developments, but they did not. I became ill and that was the point when I decided that there had to be a better way. I suppose the other milestone was that a number of the staff resigned or took early retirement. I decided that I had to work differently and involve them much more in the change process. This is when I started to write a development plan and involve everyone in it
>
> (Headteacher)

One of the teachers (13 years in school 1.) said:

> I recognise that we have to change and develop. You asked me about the stability of the past, but I don't actually feel that the school was stable. We did change things and try out new ideas. We actually did things that were quite revolutionary but we always felt vulnerable and were always worried out about pupil numbers and whether we would have a job. The other thing that always worried me was that I didn't seem to have the professional vocabulary to argue with these highly articulate and well informed parents. I sometimes felt bamboozled by them and yet could always think of a good reply that I should have given, when I am driving home after a parents evening. Looking back, we had no clear vision or objectives of what we were trying to do. We tried many things – some of which were very successful – but we never thought or enquired why, they were successful. I think that if we can update our methods and approaches and plan what we do carefully, we could enter a period of stability and meet the things that are being asked of us.
>
> (Science co-ordinator - School 1)

On being asked what she hoped to be able to offer to the children, as an outcome

of the change process that they were planning and why she thought it was important to introduce this change, the headteacher said.

> I hope that through the professional development the co-ordinators will have a greater understanding of their roles and responsibilities, so that they can work with me to improve the quality of teaching and learning. This could have a big impact on the children. It is going to be difficult to change some people's attitudes and beliefs about how they teach and work. I think it is important because there are problems of discontinuity across the school. There are pockets of excellence in the school, but mainly everyone does their own thing. There is little recognition that we are here for the children. (Headteacher of school 1)

After the initial period of stabilising the school and ensuring that it could survive and prosper, the headteacher and her senior management team (with the support of the governors), began to prepare for planned and carefully managed change. In 1999, the headteacher and governors devised a simple strategic school development plan (1999 – 2005). One of the objectives in this plan, under the heading of Teaching and Learning was to:

> Develop the role of the post holders throughout the school and to introduce monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning in order to improve the standards of pupil progress and achievement.

When asked "Why did you believe it to be necessary to introduce this planned change?" the headteacher said:

> The Director of Studies and I carried out an audit of what was happening in classrooms. I'm ashamed to say, that this was the first time that I had really focused on classrooms, teaching and learning since I had been appointed as headteacher. I had spent four years, building up the school, improving relationships with parents and the community and stabilising the school in a number of ways. However, C and I decided that now was the time to get to grips with a number of things that were bothering us. Also, I thought, how can I sell the school to parents, when there is inconsistent practice across the school. We looked at the children's books, teacher's planning, observed classroom, talked with colleagues and the children. What it revealed was not very encouraging and we both decided that the biggest problem was the inconsistency in not just what was being taught but also how it was being taught.
> (Headteacher – School 1)

The Director of Studies added, "There was a full staff meeting and we all discussed the outcomes of the audit."

> In many ways, what M said at that meeting, did not surprise C, and me but it was a surprise that she the head) saw it as a problem. I just accepted that we all did our own thing, as long as we did it well. I did not want to take on the role and responsibilities as the Early Years Co-ordinator, as I felt that it was not my job to tell someone else what to do.
> (Early Years co-ordinator and Head of Nursery)

The interviews with the staff, showed that although they appreciated being involved in the school development planning process and had reluctantly accepted the other changes that had been introduced by M. (the headteacher), that the development of the role of the post holder and the introduction of monitoring and evaluation was perceived as a major change.

> Like everyone else, I was slightly annoyed and anxious about what was being proposed, however, the fact that M had bothered to do her homework properly and had looked at the actual practice in the school and was basing her suggestions on real issues within the classrooms, made it difficult to argue against.
>
> (Music co-ordinator and long serving teacher)

> I was startled when M pointed out that Year 3 and 4 were covering the same history and that there were gaps in other parts of the curriculum. Also, when she showed the analysis of how many worksheets were being used, I agreed that we had to do something.
>
> (History co-ordinator)

> For the first time, I was being asked to look across the whole school and not just key stage 2. I had never had the time to look at key stage 1 or the foundation stage, so in many ways, I was quite excited
>
> (Maths co-ordinator.)

The range of responses, above, provides a picture of the reaction and response to the headteacher's findings from the audit of classrooms. The outcome of the staff meeting was that the staff were not surprised by what was revealed. However, they were surprised that this was seen as a problem and that it required some form of remedy.

The next stage in this process was for each teacher to meet individually with the headteacher to discuss and re-negotiate job descriptions, roles and responsibilities, which were then published to all governors and staff. The final aspect of the process was the recognition by the headteacher and governors that some support, in the form of professional development and release time for teachers to enable them to carry out their new management roles.

Although the above decisions had been taken at a series of staff meeting and everyone

had spoken at some point of another during the meeting, there continued to be an initial period of reluctance and concern about the changes that had been proposed and agreed. However, over a period of about half a term there was general acceptance that planned change was going to happen, although over three-quarters of the staff were anxious about change generally and the additional workload. No one voiced this concern at future staff meetings, but were prepared to discuss it when questioned.

> What's the point? It's going to happen, and who knows it may work. We are becoming just like a State school you know
> (Part time teacher with no post of responsibility but who has worked at the school for 6 years.)

This specific planned change arose because of two influences. Firstly, the headteacher's previous difficult and negative experiences, over the five year period, of trying to stabilise the school and undertaking developments without the staff's full involvement; secondly, the outcomes of the audit of classroom practice that the headteacher and Director of Studies had carried out in late 1999/ early 2000, in order to support the strategic school development plan and to help her in prioritising improvements and developments.

The change in attitude and acceptance from the staff came about because of an the alliance between some of the staff and the headteacher; the whole staff's feeling of involvement, both generally and specifically; the range of evidence that the headteacher and director of studies presented to them, as an outcome of the audit; and although they voiced a sense of unease in the interviews, there was an acceptance that the school had to develop and that inevitably their roles, responsibilities and jobs would change.

During the improvement process

School 1. had planned to develop the role of the subject leaders and to introduce

monitoring, evaluation and review of the quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement. The process began with the headteacher creating the conditions for the planned change by re-negotiating the subject leaders' job descriptions, roles and responsibilities. These were then published to other members of staff and the governing body. The whole staff agreed an action plan for development, which was followed by a day of whole school professional development on the role and responsibilities of subject leaders and monitoring and evaluation.

> The planned programme of classroom observations by the English and mathematics co-ordinators has been completed during this term. The timetable has been more or less adhered to and the principle objectives have been achieved. The observation schedule, which we agreed during the training, has worked well and all teachers have been observed, except the PE specialist.
>
> (Headteacher of school 1)

> I've scrutinised children's work and teacher's planning. It wasn't as difficult as I had imagined and I think that I've probably gained more from the process than the teachers that I have been observing have. I feel more confident now about the continuity and progression across the school and have been able to make some small changes in the way we teach reading and writing, which I couldn't have made before.
>
> (English co-ordinator)

> I think that we should now accelerate the programme for monitoring, as I've found it really useful to receive confidential feedback from colleagues that I know and trust, about my own work in the classroom. I don't want to wait until next year, for feedback on how I teach other subjects.
>
> (Year 2 teacher)

The initial outcome of this process was that the teachers became aware that they were being observed.

> I keep my classroom tidier and better organised. I also pay more attention to my short term planning.
>
> (Year 1 teacher)

> I like the feedback. In fact, it is the first time that I have ever had any real comment on what I actually do in the classroom and it has helped me to reflect on my work with the children.
>
> (Year 3 teacher)

The headteacher believed that she and the Senior Management Team (SMT) are now able to respond more quickly and appropriately to issues that teachers raised about resources or equipment, time-tabling difficulties of issues of classroom management and organisation, as they are better informed. Instead of innovations being always "top-down," this was causing a "bottom-up" approach.

I think that the classroom practise is effecting whole school decisions, by what is coming out of the monitoring and evaluation. (Headteacher)

There have been improvements in the standard of feedback that teachers provide for children and marking of work generally. There is a better link between prep (homework) and the planned objective in the lessons. A. has also seen an improvement in handwriting and presentation, as this was something that she raised at the first general feedback session to the whole staff and alerted everyone to some small issues. There has also been a reduction in unfinished work, perhaps because we have been scrutinising children's work. The other pleasing thing has been the improvement in mental maths teaching, as now everyone includes this in every maths lessons. S. raised this issue during one of her feedback sessions to the staff and consequently it is now happening. We have changed some of what we do and an awful lot of how we do it. (Deputy headteacher)

The capacity building strategies that were used in school 1. targeted individual teachers, as members of a whole school team.

Discussion with the teachers of school 1. often focused upon their knowledge and skills, however, there are other areas of teacher capacity that are vital. Research suggests that the capacity to teach in different ways is directly connected to views of self, to teachers' beliefs about their role in classroom activity and to the personas they adopt in the classroom. The headteacher and the two subject co-ordinators, (who were also members of the SMT), who led this planned improvement did so, by focusing upon the children's learning and recommending small changes in practice. They fostered changes in teachers' attitudes to subject-matter, which teachers did not find challenging or worrying, as this was not focused on their practice in classrooms initially. However, gradually the focus moved onto teaching methods. However, in order to build this capacity for change, certain conditions were put into place at whole school level before embarking upon the planned improvement process that would impact at classroom level. Table 1. describes the processes that the school moved through.

Table 1.: Stages of the improvement process in school 1.

1. Creating the conditions for success:	• Re-negotiation of job descriptions, roles and responsibilities; • Publication of new job descriptions; • Agreement on values; • Clarity and consensus on purpose and processes; • Involvement of staff in decision making on action planning.
2. Building capacity with individual teachers:(developing shared understanding and meanings):	• Professional development for all staff on the role of subject leaders; • Agreeing processes and timetables for monitoring and evaluation;
3. Negotiation: (Questioning existing practice, analysing and integrating suggested changes into practice)	• Trial of the process of two by the core subject leaders, with feedback to individual teachers and to the whole staff; • Agreement on how the whole school should now proceed and action plan amended.
4. Developing momentum and coherence: (Putting new ideas to the test, analysing and adapting new and existing practices)	• Carefully managed implementation of the action plan; • Regular feedback to SMT, governors and whole staff on the process and outcomes; • Action plan is amended during the process, in order to deal with unexpected events.
5. Sustaining momentum:	• The innovation becomes an accepted part of school life; • Teachers have evidence of an impact on themselves and the pupils; • Teachers use the indicators of success to adjust their practice.

The essential factors to the successful management of this improvement episode in school 1. appears to have been the preparation in creating the right conditions for change; the modification of the action plan both before and during the improvement process, where the headteacher demonstrated sensitive flexibility in meeting and solving the staff's concerns and anxieties; and the constant interchange of professional information at both a formal and an informal level.

The external adviser and the trainer, who led the professional development day, were seen to have contributed directly to capacity building and change. One of the teachers said:

> It was the best professional development that we have ever had, as it was someone from the outside, explaining and helping us to decide how we could manage the process. They emphasised professionalism and learning. (Art co-ordinator)

The headteacher and the two subject co-ordinators managed and maintained the momentum during the improvement episode. They constantly reminded the staff of the purpose and ensured a collective view about the direction and nature of this particular improvement. There were opportunities for disagreement and challenge, however, compared to the past, this was a constructive and positive discussion. The headteacher believes that she was flexible and adapted the action plan to meet individual's concerns and demands.

After the improvement process

> I believe now that there have been improvements……..
>
> I have evidence…… that teachers are now planning more consistently and effectively. Also, this is happening coherently across the school. With better planning, there is also evidence of more appropriate teaching that consists of a wider range of methods and approaches, but more important than the range and quantity of teaching methods, I think that we are beginning to improve the quality of our instructional methods. (Headteacher)

All of the teachers agreed with the statement made by their headteacher and they also believed that they now use a greater range of teaching methods and many of them thought that differentiation was planned for in most lessons. Over ninety per cent (92.75%) of the teachers believed that they were making better use of teacher assessment data and the majority (87.50%) believed that learning is more appropriately matched to the children's needs. There was a greater focus on children's learning. The other improvement that they saw, was that there was increased continuity in planning between the year groups and that some changes had been made to the curriculum for English and mathematics.

There was an agreement about their shared clarity about the purposes and consequences of the change programme. The teachers believed that this had been supported by forward planning, external support and evidence of success.

The headteacher said:

> .....we talk to each other more about children's learning, rather than just their behaviour.
>
> There is also a better understanding of how we intend to teach and the impact of what we actually do. That is a big move forward. (Headteacher – School 1)

The headteacher believed that the teachers talk more openly and positively about children's learning whilst the teachers believed that they thought more about their teaching methods. There was agreement that teaching had improved because they felt better informed about the teaching practice generally and about their individual teaching styles and approaches specifically. All of the teachers were convinced that they had received and continued to received positive and constructive developmental feedback and effective professional development.

Although the headteacher raised the issue of increased workload for her staff, none of the teachers mentioned it.

The headteacher considered that she was no longer relying on "hunches" about what was happening in classrooms. Although none of the teachers verbalised about being more reflective, the majority of them talked about their strengths and weaknesses as a teacher and knowing what they had to do, in order to improve their practice in the future.

Summary

The headteacher and teachers believed that they had successfully managed the episode of improvement. There was evidence of successful outcomes in terms of teaching methodology, for example, the variety of types and forms of pupil grouping that were used, the changes in the structure of lessons and the use of different teaching methods. There was also evidence of a sense of achievement for the teachers; in addition, the management structure and decision-making processes had been

strengthened. The internal conditions (management structure, relationships, communications, and expectations) had been improved and the knowledge and skills of the staff have increased. There was also a developing feeling of community, in that the teachers were beginning to talk about their personal values and beliefs as well as their practices. The school appeared to have moved through a growth period and had mastered the first curve of change.

The evidence from this school, suggests that the capacity of the individuals had been developed and that organisational features had been strengthened. However, there was no evidence of anyone within the school considering how this experience could be part of a longer-term coherent programme of development.

CASE STUDY TWO

Introduction

School 2 is situated in a cathedral city to the north of London. It is housed in buildings that were erected in the 1960's. The school opened in 1821 and is sited on sloping ground and therefore, the school premises are built on a number of levels. A senior school shares the grounds. There is limited space for outdoor activities and children's play. The quality of the fabric within the school is of a very poor standard, with threadbare carpets, poor quality of decoration (both internally and externally) and a low standard of cleanliness throughout. The classrooms in the pre-prep department, (KS1) are small, often furnished with very old and poor quality furniture, with a poor standard of decoration and poorly equipped.

In addition, there is a purpose built art room, a design technology room and a science room. The specialist areas are well equipped and resourced.

The receptionist and the bursar share the small reception office. The headteacher's office is adjacent to the boys' lavatory and is prey to a range of unpleasant odours. It is also a very small working space for the headteacher. The senior master and director of studies have separate offices, at some distance from the centre of the school. There are future plans to re-decorate and re-carpet the school, to improve the staff room and the staff lavatories, as the teachers have to share these facilities with the children. The school is also due to take over some of the senior school's teaching space and to build a new reception and administrative area.

The school uses the National Curriculum and subject specialist teaching commences in Key Stage Two (KS2).

The school community

The school caters for 266 pupils, aged 3 to 11 years with 16 teachers and a headteacher. There are also two classroom assistants, the receptionist/secretary, bursar and two cleaners. The children share the senior school's dining facilities at lunch times. The two schools share the same governing body.

Seventy five percent of the teachers have been appointed to the school within the past two years. This was caused by staff resigning or retiring on ground of ill health or by seeking appointments in other schools. The other changes in staff have been caused by the dismissal of two teachers on the grounds of incompetence. This is not unusual for this school, as there has been major turn over of staff within the school for the last ten years.

Most of the children live within the locality of the school. None of them travel more than 5 miles to reach the school.

The school has links with the senior school, however, these tend to be focused on the sharing of facilities rather than expertise or professional development of the staff. The school has security locks on the doors, but these are never in use. There is no reception area for parents and visitors. The school is severely hampered by its buildings and site.

The school has a shared governing body, which has an organised committee structure. This was introduced in 1996. The governors have a strategic plan for the development and improvement of both schools. The schools have increased by 15% over the past three years. They are in the bottom end of the fee band. The headteacher was appointed in 1995, as an outcome of an inspection in that year. The report had been

very critical of the buildings, facilities, standards of achievement, the quality of teaching and learning and the poor leadership offered by the previous headteacher. Parents were not aware of this report although the level of complaints and dissatisfaction were high.

> It used to be that we would receive complaints from parents frequently. What I mean by frequently, is every week.
>
> (Chair of governors- School 2)

Despite these problems, the numbers had remained steady. The governors drew up a strategic plan for improvement within the two schools in 1995 and gave the newly appointed headteacher a clear brief, to improve the school. A memorandum from the governors to the headteacher, dated November 1995 states:

> It is imperative that you form a plan to tackle the problems of poor quality in the curriculum, improve the quality of teaching, learning and standards of achievement and low staff morale. We suggest that you begin by agreeing job descriptions and define roles and responsibilities. The poor levels of relationships and communication between the pre-prep and the prep departments have to be seen as a priority for improvement…….

A member of the senior management team, who was a teacher in the school in 1995 said in an interview:

> There were no staff meetings and all communications were carried out via the staff notice board. Most teachers did not like working in the school and frequently left after a short period of time. The only management structure was the headteacher and a senior master. I don't know why I stayed but I've been here for 18 years.
>
> (Member of SMT – School 2)

When K was appointed as headteacher, she requested the help of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI). After this request, the school was visited frequently by two HMI, who assisted K (the headteacher) in drawing up a list of priorities for improvement, focused on the quality of teaching and learning. K experienced great difficulties in implementing her priorities for improvement as the teachers were not involved, motivated or concerned about introducing change. The long-serving member of staff went onto say:

> A few of us supported K but most of them weren't interested. This was for many reason and is quite complex. For some, it was because of their commitment to their church duties, for others it was because they did not want change and I suppose the others just hoped that it would all go away, if they didn't co-operate. This is how it had always been.
>
> (Year 1 teacher – School 2)

K appointed a director of studies in 1996, who worked closely with her to initiate small changes with individual teachers and subject departments.

> We began slowly, trying out ideas with individual teachers, supporting them and then moving on. Then we began to suggest small changes in different subject departments. But it always felt as if we were treading on someone else's personal domain. (Director of studies)

> Although we were not in danger of closing, these early changes were very difficult. I always felt as if I was pushing something heavy uphill. My husband was ill during this time and I didn't have the energy or know-how. Looking back, I suppose that we introduced a lot bit by bit. There were changes in curriculum documentation, planning and assessment. We were one of the pilot schools for key stage one SATs. (Headteacher of School 2)

The interviews with the headteacher and staff show that although changes took place, these were introduced in a haphazard manner, and although the list of priorities had had the support of HMI, the actual implementation was problematic. The turning point came with the appointment of the director of studies, who said:

> The history of the school has been one of poor staff relationships. K has attempted to break down this culture and to improve communications and relationships. I suppose our early lack of success was caused by those poor relationships and communication, lack of meetings and the isolation of subject departments. The view of a minority of staff was that K was acting in a dictatorial way. They saw her as autocratic and aloof. They thought that they could ignore her…….. It was when we instituted weekly staff meetings, termly curriculum meetings and termly sessions of professional development in 1997 that things began to slowly change. We also bought in a critical friend, who developed quite a positive relationship with the staff. She persuaded us to write a school development plan and to involve the staff in the decision making. (Director of Studies – School 2)

During the period from 1995 to 1998, the parents became uneasy about the number of staff who were leaving the school. In the summer term 1998 one member of staff retired, two were dismissed and two "walked-out," due to the changes that they were being asked to implement. However, the staff who remained all agreed in the interviews that the communications and relationships had improved. None of the long- serving members of staff expressed a view about the extra workload.

> The effect on some colleagues was devastating. It was probably right that we had to change but K tried to implement too many things at once and we all felt under attack. It is much better now, because change is carefully introduced and we always agree the way forward.
> (Head of pre-prep and Year 2 teacher)

Another long-serving member of staff said:

> We just didn't understand what was happening and why. After all, the parents had been sending their children here for many years and although we had complaints, as every school

> does, it wasn't until K came along and became head that this started happening. It has been terrible. I wasn't able to sleep and now I have to plan my work. (French teacher – School 2)

A newly appointed teacher said:

> I joined the school after K was appointed and as I started I was given a range of information (by K), that made it easy for me to slot into the routine organisation and expectations. I think it is brilliant to know what is happening in other departments, subjects and everything.
> (Year 4 teacher and technology co-ordinator at School 2)

> A real mixture, the positive side is that the young, enthusiastic teachers are now staying with us but the negative side is the workload and trying to placate the parents because of the uproar caused by the departing staff. It has been a difficult time for the school, as teaching staff were dismissed or resigned. Hell broke loose when I suggested an assessment policy and a common recording system. I was accused by some teachers of stepping onto their territory. In fact there was a period when half of the staff didn't speak to me and it divided the staff room. However, I persevered and would not stop. I refused to retreat and slowly staff either gave in or gave me the benefit of the doubt or were won over or left. The senior master's departure on the second day of term in a new academic year was catastrophic but in the end welcome and has meant that we have been able to build in a more positive way, since autumn 1998. The main thing that I have learned is that change has to be planned and managed carefully.
> (Headteacher of School 2)

The focus of the pedagogical improvement was to introduce monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching, learning and standards of pupil achievement by the subject co-ordinators.

Before the planned pedagogical improvement.

The school has focused on two main areas, updating and improving the curriculum and introducing staff development. In order to develop the curriculum, the school has now introduced curriculum documentation in all subjects, an assessment policy, a whole school record keeping system and a whole school planning process. The development of staff has seen the introduction of continuous professional development linked to teacher appraisal. The headteacher has formed a senior management team and introduced an induction programme for new members of staff. The pre-preparatory department (Key Stage One) now attend whole school staff meetings.

A survey sent to all parents in the school, by the governors, revealed that seventy

eight percent (78%) of parents believe that their views have been listened to and are generally pleased with the developments. Although twelve percent (12%) believe that the frequent staff changes are to be regretted and that the school has been damaged by all of the changes. There have been no resignations or requests for references for other posts during 1998-2000.

The headteacher had been directed by the governors to introduce planned and strategic change, in order to improve all aspects of the curriculum, school organisation and management, the quality of the teaching and learning and the standards of pupil achievement. There was also pressure for change from the parents, who were vocal in voicing their disapproval of the management of the school and the high turn-over of teaching staff. The list of priorities for development and improvement, which had been suggested by HMI, included:

> Developing the role of the middle managers within the school, to enable them to take responsibility for the curriculum, organisation, standards of teaching and learning and future developments within their areas/aspects of responsibility.

As a consequence, at a senior management team meeting in September 1999, it was decided that this should be the priority for the academic year 2000/1 and that the change needed to introduced sensitively to the staff. A minute of the meeting recorded:

> It was been decided (unanimously) that the following actions will be taken:
>
> - to introduce the idea of staff taking on full responsibility for their curriculum/subject/age phase responsibilities;
> - to negotiate job descriptions with all staff;
> - to provide professional development and support to all staff;
> - to devise a draft policy for monitoring and evaluation that is agreed with all staff;
> - to introduce a programme of classroom monitoring, commencing in September 2000 with the core subjects and foundation subjects from September 2001;
> - to provide release time for members of staff to carry out these roles;
> - to draw up an action plan which will be presented to the staff in spring term 2000;
> - to cost out these actions and decisions and to gain the governors commitment and agreement;
> - to present to the staff in spring term 2000.

During the staff meeting, in January 2000, the headteacher made a presentation to the staff on roles and responsibilities of post holders. This caused remarkably little concern or interest from the teachers.

> When K made the announcement about our changing roles, we all just accepted it. It had been obvious for a long time that this was coming. Although I don't think that we quite realised what it would entail. It was good to see K taking on the leadership and control of the school, after being so withdrawn……I think I felt relieved.
> (English Co-ordinator)

> After the very difficult times, a few years ago, we all made the collective decision that we had to pull together. It was inevitable that this would be next and in many ways it is what is needed. Also we have lots of new staff from the state sector and they are used to this sort of thing – so we will look to them.
> (long serving key stage 1 teacher)

There had been a general acceptance of change after the difficult and acrimonious times of 1998. The headteacher worked on relationships and improving communications with staff, parents and governors. By spring term 2000, she believed that the school community was stable and confident enough to take the next step and so introduced the next priority on her list provided by the HMI. When asked if she would have introduced this change, if it had not been suggested by the HMI, she replied:

> I don't think I would have, because it would never have occurred to me.
> (Headteacher of School 2)

A few weeks later, she said:

> As you know, the school is now on a very stable footing, we have few complaints from parents, very few problems in the staff room or with the governors. It therefore, seems the right time to undertake the next thing on my list of priorities. I have been thinking about your question that you asked during your last visit and I think my answer was honest but not quite accurate. We would have got around to this type of development eventually but I think that the outside support, advice and guidance from the HMI has been crucial in helping us….no I mean helping me in making decisions.
> (Headteacher of School 2)

The Director of Studies believes that there are a number of influences for this specific change at this time in the school:

> The atmosphere and relationships have really improved, the changes that have happened over the last two years have proved to be successful and accepted by the staff. The parents are now quite supportive and it is rare to get a complaint and if we do, we are seen to act immediately. There are certain members of staff who are now very supportive and are actively working to support this specific change. It may have been helpful that it was suggested by someone from

> outside the school – HMI, I mean and it is also important that now K involves everyone in the decision making process. However, I think the biggest reasons are because K is now seen to be really proactive and not withdrawn. (Director of Studies at School 2)

A newly appointed teacher said:

> Even I can see that we have to do something to share the workload with K and that is why the staff are not making problems or difficulties. After everything, they have been through with her, they don't want to lose her. (Year 5 teacher at School 2)

This specific planned change arose because of two major influences: Firstly, the headteacher 's previous difficult and negative experiences. During this period she had withdrawn from the leadership of the school and had isolated herself from the staff. However, this difficult period had been overcome and she had begun to involve the teachers in the decision making process. K was perceived to be less aloof and more caring. Secondly, the advice and guidance provided by HMI.

The change in attitude and acceptance from the staff came about because of: The alliance between the strategic compliers and the headteacher; the staff's feeling of involvement, both generally and specifically; the involvement of HMI; and the increasing high profile management and leadership role of the headteacher.

During the improvement process

School 2 was undertaking an identical improvement to school 1. and had planned to develop the role of the subject and age phase leaders and to introduce monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching, quality learning and pupil achievement. As with school 1., the headteacher had re-negotiated job descriptions, an action plan for implementation was agreed by the whole staff and an in-service day was successfully led by an external trainer.

The planned programme of classroom observations by the English co-ordinator (who was also the Senior Master) had been half completed during the first few weeks of the

summer term and nine teachers who teach English had been observed once, with a particular focus upon basic writing skills, especially spelling. An agreed observation schedule was used. No confidential individual feedback was provided by the English co-ordinator to the teachers, however, the headteacher, unexpectedly and inexplicably, decided to publish the English co-ordinator's confidential notes to her, as open reports to everyone in the school.

All of the staff who had been monitored, said that they agreed with the principles underpinning the process, however, there was concern that the feedback was not confidential and one-to-one, but an open report to all staff. As one teacher said, "this is so humiliating."

The headteachers response was:

> I don't think there is anyone on the staff who is not professional enough not to accept criticism, and I may question someone who is not able to accept that. I would not use the word humiliated but I feel that staff should be open about their weaknesses as well as their strengths…….. I don't think that staff are crucified and they are not being threatened. It is better that things are out in the open. We are a team and need to support each other.
>
> (Headteacher at School 2)

The staff expressed their concerns:

> I wouldn't be upset by a comment that said this happened and you need to go up this path in the future. That's not negative, its constructive. But when a co-ordinator says, I didn't like this or that, it becomes negative. We have all had negative and very personal comments, not based on evidence or fact. (Year 3 teacher at School 2)
>
> This sort of comment doesn't give you the right to reply.
>
> (Geography co-ordinator and Year 4 teacher at School 2)
>
> It was negative and I thought, right, wait until I have to monitor you and then I'll get you back. Childish isn't it?
>
> (Year 5 teacher at School 2)
>
> I don't like this naming and blaming.
>
> (Part time teacher working with year 2 at School 2)
>
> Of course, I am also to blame, because I wrote those reports. But when I wrote them I thought that they were confidential to each teacher and that we would then discuss them. I never dreamt that K would publish them to everyone. I've also learned a lot and know from the challenges from the teachers that I didn't always base my comments on actual events in the classroom. I have found the whole thing difficult and I am thinking about resigning as well.
>
> (Senior master and English co-ordinator)

In June, the nine teachers wrote formally to the headteacher, requesting that this form

of feedback should be ended and requested a meeting with her to discuss the matter. K (the headteacher) acknowledged the letter but refused to meet with the teachers formally.

> I think that if the temperature of people's feelings are given an opportunity to cool down, we will be able to get the action plan back on course. (Headteacher)

Throughout the second half of the summer term there was concern and anxiety amongst the nine teachers who were being monitored and eventually the teachers refused to be involved in the second round of observations. Each teacher informed and took advice from their professional associations.

They refused to make any other comments to me, other than those above. I was asked by the teachers not to attend any staff meetings for the rest of the half term, other than the ones that focused on other areas of the research project.

At the end of June, the staff met with the governors and presented a formal request that the feedback to the teachers should be on a confidential basis. The governors responded by sending a letter to K. (the headteacher) requesting her resignation. After a series of meetings between K, her professional association advisers and the governors, it was agreed that she would resign as headteacher and take up a class teaching post in the school as from September. She was offered a financial package to ensure that she did not suffer financial loss.

K's resignation was announced to the staff in the first week of July. Only one member of the staff was prepared to comment on the matter:

> I'm sorry that it had to come to this, but it was inevitable. (Year 4 teacher)

In the second week of July, the governors appointed the senior master/English co-ordinator, as the interim headteacher. During the autumn term, he was appointed as

headteacher of the school.

During this difficult period, there were no complaints or concerns raised by the parents. The parents accepted the governor's letter of explanation of the headteacher's resignation due to "ill-health." The headteacher appeared to willingly accept the governor's decision as the right one because, " it was made by a higher authority."

The problems and outcomes that occurred during the initial monitoring phase in school 2. had become linked to the short comings of individuals, the headteacher, the Senior master/English co-ordinator and the teachers. This personalised the problems and led to defensiveness and perhaps misdiagnosis of the true causes. As a consequence the organisational, curriculum and teaching defects were attributed to the monitoring feedback methods and for a brief time, the planned change programme came to an abrupt end.

> I don't like what has happened, but it is probably for the best. It is a symptom of what is wrong in the school – trying to do too much too fast. You can't manage change in this way.
> (Director of Studies)

> The problem is that K had not taken into account that you have to take people through change, systematically. Of course, she was trying to do everything for the best reasons and to ensure that there was openness in communications and that people were being held to be accountable. But she seems to have forgotten the emotions and feelings of the people she was working with .
> (Senior Master and English co-ordinator)

Table 2 attempts to demonstrate the stages of decline in the improvement process in school 2. There was clarity of purpose but no shared ownership of that purpose or the intentions of change. There was no shared control over the implementation process and an inappropriate mix of pressure with little support. The early evidence of difficulties were not addressed and as a consequence there appeared to little will, skill or enthusiasm to correct this. This led to a rapid decline in relationships between the teachers and the headteacher, which in turn led to the development of alliances between the teachers and the Senior Master and the teachers and the governors. These

anti-change and anti-risk alliances led to the disintegration of the planned improvement episode and the headteachers position.

Table 2 Stages in the unsuccessful improvement process in School 2.

1. Creating the conditions for failure:	• Superficial, poorly defined and misunderstood agreements on roles and responsibilities put into place; • Lack of understanding and ownership about the purpose or process of the change.
2. Building incapacity:	• Professional development did not develop shared understandings or meanings; • Professional development and initial planning did not meet the actual needs (knowledge and skills) of the teachers, as these had not been identified; • Individuals were encouraged to have an over inflated belief in their own capabilities to carry out the task.
3. Developing incoherence:	• The focus on teaching and learning was inappropriate; • Lack of leadership at all levels; • Internal conditions were not robust and established.
4. Developing resistance:	• Individual anxieties are not dealt with; • Headteacher isolates herself and enables individual resisters to become a subversive group.
5. Disintegration:	• Change process is temporarily halted; • Uncertainty, disintegration of communications and relationships; • Shared anti-change and risk alliances formed.

After the planned improvement process

The overwhelming belief of the staff and the new headteacher was that the quality of teaching and learning had marginally declined. However, with the appointment of the new headteacher, (who was the previous Senior Master/Co-ordinator for English), there was now a focus on the things that are relatively easy to change and a drive to begin to create the conditions where learners can learn effectively. The newly appointed headteacher recognised that some curriculum re-structuring would be needed in order to support the "re-skilling" of teachers. He also felt that it might be appropriate as a first step, to target certain pupil learning behaviours rather than individual teaching behaviours or practices, as a way of restoring the confidence and

trust of the teachers; and that there should be a discussion and debate about the how and why of accepted practices within the school:

> We have to enable staff to talk about their feelings, values and beliefs in order to move forward. So at the beginning of term, we had a "cards on the table" session, where I encouraged everyone to talk about their hurt, disappointments and suspicions. I now hope that we can move forward from this and begin to talk honestly and openly about why we do things in the way we do here. I mean things like, why do we do prep in this way? Why do we collect assessments like this or test children like that? And so on.
>
> (Newly appointed headteacher of School 2)

The evidence suggests that the teachers were disillusioned, de-motivated and that morale was low. However, there are individuals within the school who still had energy, motivation and enthusiasm. Further, the teacher's responses indicate that individual learning about "what not to do" has been internalised. All of them talked about the fact that a good school cannot work effectively without good relationships and communications. Over half of them want to be involved in future decision-making processes and all of them said that "it is better to work as a team."

The new headteacher was a member of the previous management structure, which has the possibility of being problematic; as research suggests that leadership is, to some extent, context-related. He faces a variety of demands and challenges, and knows that he is not in a position of power and control, due to his connections and relationships with the previous management and leadership of the school. The additional sensitive difficulty, is that the previous headteacher is now a classroom teacher within the school. Although no one talked openly about this matter, other than the new headteacher, he believes that this will make it difficult for the school to undertake constructive self-analysis or evaluation about the past, in order to learn from it. Despite this, he has recognised that he has to "act with others and enable others to act." (Harris 2002)

> First of all, I have to develop the right relationships and atmosphere in the school to take things forward..... I have to be tactful and sensitive and you know that this isn't my

> strength….. I have to accept that they cannot run before they have experienced walking….. You can't do it alone,…..I need help to bring them together, in order for them to help themselves and each other. (New headteacher of School 2)

Summary

The consequences of the devastating change process have been quite difficult to ascertain. There are the very obvious and simplistic outcomes that are related to the employment positions of the previous headteacher and the succeeding headteacher. The evidence also suggests that the school was probably at a very low point at the end of the previous term. There was little or no management and leadership of the school, teachers have talked about the fact that they worked in total isolation to each other during the latter half of the summer term and that their main priority was to "survive until the summer holidays." (Director of Studies). The evidence appears to show that the original headteacher and senior managers reverted to their previous behaviour, in that they isolated themselves from the staff, were not prepared or perhaps able, to discuss the issues that were causing concern and indeed appeared to be aloof from the concerns and anxieties of the eight teachers who had been observed. This in turn led to further resistance by the teachers and the disintegration of relationships, communication and eventually the decision-making procedures within the school.

Although the original improvement/change process was focused on improving teaching and learning, it did not appear to be a sufficient reason for improvement, and there was little understanding of the nature of the school's capacity and ability to introduce, manage or sustain change. It appears that the more stress that was placed on individuals , the more their tendency was to revert to their most primitive behaviours. One of the teachers said:

> With hindsight, I can see that we were not genuinely interested in helping one another develop new capacities for improving teaching and learning. We were not ready to work together collectively. As a group of people, we now have to learn to function together. That takes a

> certain mindset, and a lot of patience and practice. Perhaps we tried to do too much, too quickly, when the school and we weren't ready for it (Year 6 teacher at School 2)

It seemed on the limited evidence of this case study that school 2. lacked the capacity of the people to have a sense of purpose and to build genuinely shared visions, (based on teachers, individually knowing what they care deeply about). The teachers and headteacher did not appear to possess the ability to see larger patterns and understand interdependency, by developing "school agreed thinking." Teachers were not enabled or supported to increase their reflective capabilities, so that they could be more aware of their own assumptions , particularly the assumptions that they would not normally question.

Consequently, school 2. is characterised by extraordinary anxiety, which was not just due to external pressures. The senior management team talked about the level of personal stress that they feel. They understand that their job has changed and as a consequence, are attempting to delegate responsibilities and decisions to other members of the staff but as the new headteacher said, " as soon as things get tough or slightly difficult, I find myself pulling the responsibility back again and I have to stop myself, as our focus now is to build the confidence, knowledge and skills of everyone."

CASE STUDY THREE

Introduction

School 3 was founded in 1902 and is situated in a town on the northern outskirts of London. It is housed in a Victorian building with new wings built in 1997, housing the pre-prep department, the science, art, design technology, special needs room and music rooms. It has pleasant grounds. The gardens, hard playing surfaces and the extensive playing fields are landscaped and surrounded by high hedges and a fence. The external and internal decoration is of a high standard. The Victorian house, which is the centre of the school is not an ideal space for teaching, however, the staff have attempted to ensure that it meets the needs of the children. All classrooms are well equipped, bright and colourful with the children's work attractively displayed.

All of the specialist teaching areas are equipped to a very high standard and a new music and ICT block were completed in 2000. The hall is used as a gymnasium and for assembly. There is a dining hall adjacent to the hall. The school uses the National Curriculum and there is subject specialist teaching from the beginning of Key Stage Two. French, music and PE are taught by subject specialists in Key Stage One.

<u>The school community</u>

The school caters for 184 children, aged 4 to 11 years with 16 teachers and a headteacher. There are 3 classroom assistants and a nursery nurse who works in the reception class. The school operates an extended day from 08.00 to 18.00. There is also a bursar and school receptionist/secretary, plus a caretaker, two cleaners and six kitchen ladies.

Thirty percent of the teachers have been appointed to the school within the last three years. This was caused by teachers either gaining promotion or leaving the school,

retirement and the dismissal of two members of staff.

Before the planned pedagogical improvement

When the headteacher was appointed in 1996, this school was seen by the parents to be a small, successful school with a strong focus on the early years and the Key Stage One age group. However, the governors were aware of a problem within the school.

> When we appointed M as headteacher, we asked her to look at the problems that were happening between the infants and the juniors. The junior teachers seemed to have been left to their own devices and there was little communication or continuity between the two departments. We deliberately looked for a headteacher who would develop a whole school approach and build a team. We also knew that we were going to be inspected in the future and that under the new ISI approach the report would be made public. We were worried that this would cause problems with the parents and that we would loose pupil numbers.
>
> (Chair of governors)

The headteacher had experience of working in both the maintained and independent sectors. Her first actions were to introduce an audit and review of curriculum documentation and classroom practice across the whole school.

> This really caused some problems, as key stage two thought that I was interfering in their work. After my first term one key stage two teacher resigned and I had to begin disciplinary action with another teacher. A further teacher received two written warnings. A series of anonymous letters were sent to the governors and placed on the staff notice board. I knew who was doing it, but could not do a great deal about it. I had the support of the governors and nearly all of the key stage one staff. (Headteacher)

> It was a really horrible time, as the relationships within the staff room were really sour. Parents were unaware of the difficulties. The art, science and music teachers believed that although the changes had been good for the pupils and the school, the way that they had been handled by M was poor. They thought that she had interfered in issues that had been traditionally and historically left to them. Unfortunately, the previous head supported them in the background. But M and I persevered and held our ground. Well what else could we do? We had needed these changes for years. (Deputy Headteacher)

These changes led to the introduction of a written early year's curriculum; monitoring and evaluation by subject co-ordinators and a staff development programme linked to teacher appraisal. A special needs co-ordinator was appointed and teachers and the headteacher re-negotiated job descriptions, roles and responsibilities. Most governors undertook training on their roles and responsibilities. The staff all commented that

since 1998, the changes had been led and managed carefully. However, a further consequence had been an increase in the teachers' workload.

> I have found the attention on standards of achievement quite difficult to handle, with such young children. I look back on those pre-M years with nostalgia. (Long serving member of staff – key stage 1)

The school received a positive inspection report in 1999, where the headteacher's views and beliefs about the strengths and weaknesses of the school were echoed. The school is performing above national standards.

The headteacher said:

> I believe that they would have fought me no matter what I did. I had to stand by what I thought was right. With hindsight, I should have dealt with those three members of staff quicker and not let things fester, but you learn by your mistakes. They think that I am hard, but they don't know the cost…..I, I found it difficult, but when the anonymous letters were flying around and the previous head started to interfere by offering her support to those members of staff, well, she appointed them. I was really cross. If I was offering advice to a new head, I would say don't do what I did. I suppose I was like a bull in a china shop. I went in head down and got on with it. I've learned that yes, you have to deal with the difficulties and make hard decisions, like getting rid of someone, but also you have to persuade and carry the rest of the staff with you. I suppose I was operating in a different way to what had been the norm here and I didn't take that into account. I do now.
>
> The governors have been wonderful, very supportive. If they hadn't been supportive, I suppose I would have had to have left…..resigned or something. I think that the most important thing that I have learned since I came here is that you have to lead and manage change quite carefully. I certainly hadn't appreciated that before. I now make sure that I have the support of the governors, which is why the strategic plan is so important, because it sets the direction of the school. Secondly, you need the support of the SMT and you have to persuade the teachers to work with you. That is why everything is now so carefully planned and stage managed. I think things are good at the moment and the inspection report supports that. (Headteacher of School 3)

The focus of the improvement process was the introduction of target setting for improving the standards of pupil achievement.

During the improvement process

The catalyst for introducing target setting in order to improve student achievement, was the Independent Schools Inspection report; however, in a similar way to the first case study, there was an acceptance and ownership of this development by the headteacher and the staff.

The school embarked on the process by planning a series of professional development events that consisted of training led by an external trainer, and a range of activities that focused on visits to other schools and continuous reinforcement of the growth in teacher knowledge, skills and confidence.

As with school 1., the headteacher focused on developing consistency of values and focus, clarity about the process, and attempted to ensure that the new teacher knowledge was being utilised and transferred, through both formal and informal communication systems. There was constant adaptation of the programme and the action plan, with a focus on any impact on the children.

Changes were made in the management structure of the school, so that the most able practitioner within the senior management team was moved from the older age range of the school to the end of Key Stage One. The headteacher hoped that this action would ensure continuity and cohesion between the key stages and anticipate any possible re-opening of the breach between the two key stages, which had occurred in the past.

The outcomes have included a review of the assessment policy and amendments that have led to changes in the methods for the collection of assessment data, the way that teachers analyse and interpret that data and set individual pupil targets. Targets are now mutually agreed and set between the teacher and the pupil and they are reviewed regularly, at least termly. The use of individual pupil target record cards has been found to be successful with the majority of the children and many of the initial administrative and manageability difficulties of these cards, have been resolved. Teachers said that pupils are increasingly more able to say when they had fulfilled a target and to talk about what they believe their next target should be. Targets have

also been found to increase the motivation of the pupils, and this is thought to be because they are carefully designed and given a high profile in the classroom and the school.

Parents have said that the targets have helped to improve communication between home and school, as they receive a written copy of their child's targets and are referred to within the twice-yearly reports.

> It must be remembered that the setting of targets alone will not raise standards. It is the teachers working with children that make the difference. However, we have found that if the children are actively involved in the target setting process and their targets are based on the teachers knowledge of the pupil and assessment data, then pupils' interest in their own learning can be stimulated. This stimulation can promote a positive attitude and often result in higher levels of achievement. (Deputy headteacher)

> We have found that target setting at pupil level is a positive vehicle for improving pupil performance, however, I think that certain conditions apply before you can do this. You have to have a positive attitude and understanding by the teachers on how they can set challenging but realistic targets. Targets have to be based on sound evidence of what the pupil knows and can do, and this has dramatic connections to teacher knowledge, confidence and skills. Also the targets have to be specific and measurable. I would say that the other thing that we have achieved is the regular review of targets and the celebration of success by children and teachers. (Headteacher)

The headteacher and the staff believe that they have been successful because they have implemented a broad strategy for improvement, but that they then related the improvements specifically to the context of their school and the learning needs of the children. The responses of the teachers support this belief.

> We know that this is the flavour of the year and that many schools are looking at this. But we have been successful because of the way in M. organised the in-service at the beginning and got us all reflecting and thinking about what was happening during this term. (French teacher)

> I think it was because we all thought it was important and we were well prepared. In addition, when we've made mistakes or had problems, we were able to talk about it and change either the direction or the timetable. J. was really helpful because of her previous experience and has probably driven us all with her enthusiasm – she is a good co-ordinator. (Art co-ordinator)

The headteacher's definition of her proactive leadership and management role was:

> I saw my job as one of leading the staff in agreeing what had to be done and how, lifting expectations and then managing the process in a variety of ways. I wanted to make sure that this process didn't undo all the hard work in bringing the two key stages together and so took what I hoped would be appropriate action. I probably didn't need to do it, and it was a case of belt and braces, but I wasn't going to take the risk. (Headteacher|)

School 3. added an additional layer to the stages of the improvement process compared to school one, (Table 3), by actually undertaking their own investigation into how effective they were being. The headteacher conducted a survey of pupils in key stage two, a sample of parents, and all of the teachers to ascertain if the target setting process had had been any real impact. This information supported the teachers in celebrating success but also in reflecting on how the target setting process could be further improved. They have now decided to focus on improving their baseline assessment of the younger pupils entering the school, by undertaking a range of practical assessments activities that involve the child and the parents in order to provide more effective and accurate information about individual pupil's strengths, weaknesses and potential. They believe that this will provide a baseline information that will support future target setting and enable them to measure pupil performance.

Table 3 The stages of successful improvement process for School 3

1. Creating the internal conditions for successful change	
2. Building individual teacher capacity	
3. Negotiation	
4. Developing momentum and coherence	
5. Sustaining momentum	
6. Initiating the second curve of improvement (Considering the effects beyond the teacher)	• The teacher's investigate the impact of their actions and learn from it; • Students and parents views are sought and valued.

After the improvement process

The teachers of school 3. talked about a range of improvements to the way that they planned and assessed learning, and they were unanimous in saying that they all used a wider range of teaching methods than before. The majority of them (81.25%) believed that children are more involved in their own learning and are making improved progress.

The headteacher had undertaken a survey of parental and pupil attitudes about their perceptions of the improvement process and outcomes. It seems that this sharing of success supported and even promoted the development of ideas and the open exchange of opinions and experiences amongst the teachers.

> They (the teachers) are more involved and motivated, as they like getting the feedback from the children and parents. (Headteacher)

The teachers were able to articulate a wide range of consequences from successfully achieving the objectives and the task that they had set themselves and appeared to have to moved into a slightly advanced stage of thinking and reflection. They no longer believed that implementing one area of improvement was going to improve pedagogy.

> It must be remembered that the setting of targets alone will not raise standards. It is teachers working more effectively with children that will make the difference. If children are actively involved in the target setting process and their targets are based on the teacher's knowledge of the child and assessment data, then children's interest in their own learning can be stimulated. This stimulation can promote a positive attitude and often results in higher levels of achievement. But I now realise that it is a much more complex process than I had first thought. Also, we have learned that if you do one thing well, it leads to the next and so on. (Year 6 teacher)

The deputy headteacher said,

> In the past when we discussed improving something in the classroom, we often looked at the problem, as if it was an individual problem for each of us. This time, we looked at the improvement process, which was comprised of many individual tasks for all of us. It was as if the process we were going through acted as a thread or safety net to the success of the actual tasks or activities. None of these tasks, or each of us working on our own, can improve the way we teach. Only when they are put together do the individual activities create value and improve teaching. (Deputy headteacher of School 3)

The senior management team believed that the reason why they had had difficulties of improving the standards of teaching and learning in the past, was because they had concentrated on individual activities and tasks for improvement rather than the processes of how the activities fit together into a whole; and that they had always focused on one type of professional development. They also thought that, previously, each teacher had perceived the management of change as an individual problem for

each of them, or someone else's problem, rather than an issue for the whole school and all of the staff.

Summary

There is an enormous gap between intellectually understanding an idea and really appreciating what it means. The first is conceptual, the second is personal and experiential. While it is not particularly difficult to comprehend the abstract notion of undertaking an improvement in target setting in order to improve pupil achievement, it is quite something else for an individual teacher to come to terms with how this transition affects his or her own practice. As school 3. has focused on improvement and the management of improvement processes; the staff's roles, responsibilities and expectations have changed and been adapted; the evidence suggests that transition in practice has occurred.. The teachers think that this was partly an outcome of the individual capacity building process, which also contributed to the organisational capacity building. For the majority of teachers (87.50%) their work in classrooms is now more satisfying and rewarding. The analysis of the teacher's responses indicate that success appears to have three prerequisites: knowledge, perspective and attitude. The headteacher of school 3. believes that pedagogical improvement cannot succeed without a solid grounding and development in the knowledge that the teachers must apply in the classroom.

> Obviously, every individual teacher must make a strong personal commitment to learning the particular skills that his or her role requires. (Headteacher)

But improving pedagogy demands more than just assimilating and maintaining an improved body of knowledge. In school 3. they are persuaded that it has also meant having a special perspective, a characteristic style of thinking.

> The heart of adding value comes from applying knowledge and creativity to existing and new situations, for both the teachers and the children. (Headteacher)

The headteacher believes that, "You have to get the conditions right first of all and you have to develop the teacher's knowledge and understanding of teaching and teaching processes." Improving pedagogy in school 3. appeared to be altering the perspective and attitudes of the staff. As always, language is key in beginning to understand how people view their world and it was interesting to note how often the teachers used words such as "team," "together," "result" and "learning."

> You don't need to keep starting from the beginning – as you can build on the successes of what has gone before. (Headteacher)

CASE STUDY FOUR

Introduction

School 4 is situated in a town on the northern edge of the M25. It was opened in 1925 and housed in a 1950's two storey building with a number of new additions, such as the nursery, the kindergarten and reception class. On the second floor there is a purpose built science laboratory and an art and design technology studio. There have also been recent refurbishment's of the library, the ICT suite, the music room and the offices and reception areas. The school is situated on a very small plot of land, with very limited playing field facilities or parking areas. Major roads surround it and therefore, traffic congestion is a problem at the beginning and end of school hours. Despite these difficulties, the limited space has been used imaginatively and the displays of children's work is colourful and sensitively presented.

The internal and external decoration is of a high standard. The hard play surfaces are furnished with a wide range of play equipment for all ages of children. The large school hall is also the gymnasium. There is a separate dining area and kitchen.

All of the specialist teaching areas are equipped to a very high standard and there are further plans to improve the buildings, in order to overcome the small size of the year five and six form rooms.

<u>The school community</u>

The school caters for 250 children, aged 2.5 years to 11 years with 19 teachers and a headteacher. There are three classroom assistants who work with the kindergarten, reception and year one classes. The school operates an extended day from 08.00 to 18.00. There is also a bursar and two school secretaries, a caretaker, two cleaners, four kitchen assistants, a part time librarian, a ICT technician, a part time matron and

a part time special needs assistant.

There has been one retirement, two teachers have been promoted to senior posts in other schools and two teachers have left for other positions. With the exception of the replacement teachers, all the other staff are long-serving members of staff.

When the headteacher was appointed in 1996, she replaced a head that had been very popular with the staff and much loved by some of them. The previous head had been in post for 23 years. P (the newly appointed headteacher) immediately encountered hostility on being appointed. 25% of the staff (including the deputy headteacher) made a formal complaint to the governors, two weeks after she took up the headship. The signed letter to the governors cites:

> .....it is inevitable that P will want to change things and we are not happy about that. The school is highly successful and any changes will be seen by ourselves and many of the parents as a criticism of H..... (H was the previous headteacher)

On interviewing the staff, the main criticisms that were made about the headteacher were

> .....her poor communication and leadership skills.
> (Year 2 teacher at School 4)

However, one member of the staff, who had not signed the letter, made the following comments:

> I didn't want to get involved. I wanted to keep my head down, as I thought that it was only natural for a new head to make changes, but that was not a popular thing to say.
> (Art teacher at School 4)

The chair of governors intervened:

> I called a staff meeting of all members of staff and explained that P had the full confidence and support of the governors. I also explained that if they (the teachers I mean) didn't like the school or the actions that P was going to take, then they should find another post.
> (Chair of governors at School 4)

He added:

> I have to tell you that the governors and I had grave concerns about all of this, as we couldn't work out if it was P or the staff who were at fault. But we thought we must be seen to back her, after all she hadn't done anything, just talked about doing things. I did not tell P this at the time, but she does know this now and we laugh about it Chair of governors at School 4)

The headteacher felt under attack and as a consequence isolated her from the staff.

> I didn't go into the staff room for five months. It wasn't until X retired that I felt that I had a chance.
>
> I made a silly mistake when I was appointed. I thought that the teachers would work with me as they had worked with my predecessor. What I didn't take into account were the depth of the personal relationships, the fact that they didn't know or trust me. I made all sort of errors and although I had planned the changes carefully, I introduced things – well ideas really- that weren't appropriate, tried to lead change in a planned but haphazard way – if that's not a contradiction. I didn't take them into my confidence and it all blew up in my face
>
> Once the chair intervened and x left, the situation changed. That doesn't mean it has been easy. I've often felt that I am walking on eggshells but it does get better and on the whole, we are developing a strong team. Change is not the problem – how you manage it is.
>
> (Headteacher at School 4)

The deputy said:

> When P was appointed, we all missed H. I know that we misjudged the situation but somehow we had hoped to turn the clock back. Yes, I know that it was unrealistic but it was an emotional thing as things had not changed in this school for a very long time.....suddenly we had gone from a head who shared everything to a head to wanted to change everything but share nothing
>
> I think, looking back, that we felt excluded and therefore, victims. Perhaps that is not acceptable in the state sector or they are used to change but I feel that we had a bad time. However, when we made the decision to get on with it, we have done. The agreement the three of us made with P was that we would work together, form a SMT and put a SDP together and take it from there. (Deputy headteacher at School 4)

The other impetus for change came from an inspection in 1998, which highlighted areas for development within the curriculum leadership and management and the quality of teaching and learning. The post-inspection action plan was a catalyst for change and development. The outcome of this was the introduction of a policy for identifying and meeting the specific needs of special educational needs children and the appointment of a special needs co- ordinator. A new Information Technology suite was built and equipped and the playground facilities were improved. The staff development programme focused on improving the standards of differentiation. New contracts and salary structure were introduced and job descriptions were re-negotiated.

Before the pedagogical improvement process

After the Independent Schools inspection in 1998, the school went a period of stability. The headteacher and the senior management team had revised and amended the school development plan, as an outcome of the ISI action plan. This had the full support of the governors and the teaching staff. In the autumn term of 1999, the governors and senior management team met to agree a strategic plan for the next five years. Under the teaching and learning objectives, the strategic plan included:

> To introduce target setting for pupils in all subjects by September 2000

The staff discussed the strategic plan in the late autumn term and there was general agreement that there would be a workshop in April 2000 on target setting.

> Nobody on the staff felt antagonistic towards this objective or the way that it was going to be implemented. Since we have worked as a senior management team, we have managed a number of changes successfully and this shouldn't prove to be a problem.
>
> (English/Curriculum co-ordinator and member of the SMT)

All of the staff echoed these thoughts.

The influence for this specific change came from within the school, from the priorities agreed between the governors and the senior management team. The staff were prepared to accept that this was the next logical step. However, a number believe that the improvement in relationships and communication between the headteacher and the staff was the main factor, in enabling developments in the curriculum, teaching and learning to take place.

> We have all learned a lot, but especially P. She is very careful to sound us out before going ahead with anything. In a strange way, I think that it is A and S (members of the SMT) that are pushing forward the changes and developments. (Year 1 teacher/SENCO)

When two members of the Senior Management Team (SMT) were asked if they believed that they were now the driving force for change, the response was:

> No, I don't think that's true. Others on the staff may perceive it that way, but the three of us work quite effectively together. We needed to put target setting into place because of the need to constantly drive up standards of achievement right across the school, but especially in key stage two. (Maths co-ordinator/member of SMT)

> After attending a local authority course on pupil achievement and assessment, it was one area that I thought that we could improve on and so I am pleased that it's being implemented. But I don't think that this is happening because of me or S, no rather, it's because of the way that the three of us are working together. We bounce ideas off each other, which is good. Also, the governors saw the sense of this, once we had explained it, at the strategic planning meeting
>
> (English/Curriculum co-ordinator/ member of SMT).

During the improvement process

School 4. had undertaken an identical focus for improvement to school 3. and followed a similar pattern of development. The difference between the two schools was that they involved their external adviser in a slightly different role. Schools 1. and 3. had used their external advisers to assist them in the identification of staff training needs, to support the headteacher and teachers during the process and as an advisor and external monitor. School 4. discussed with their external adviser how the improvements that they were making could be sustained. They decided that this could be accomplished by the adviser working with individual teachers in the classroom, to support teachers as they 'tried out' their different teaching methods and practices with the children and by working with the subject teams, in order to focus on ensuring consistency of teaching expectations, methods and strategies across the year groups. The external adviser was also requested to ensure that the improvements impacted directly on children's learning and achievement, by chairing the regular 'progress meetings' that had been introduced, where the processes and outcomes of individual children's learning was monitored and evaluated.

Consequently, the external adviser observed the strengths and weaknesses of what was happening in classrooms, analysed pupil behaviour and performance data, fed back this information to individual teachers and groups of teachers, discussed teaching methods and styles and generally asked questions. This diagnosis of the developmental needs of children's learning based on careful analysis was believed, by the headteacher and most of the teachers, to lead to accelerated teacher performance,

as the teachers perceived it to be an accurate reflection of classroom practice and pupil performance. This accelerated performance was described by the headteacher as a process where the teachers were prepared to 'try out' new or different methods, different forms of classroom organisation or different types of structure to the lessons. She believed that the accelerated performance resulted from the fact that the teachers were using a wider range of teaching methods that enabled the children to work more effectively and that this came about because of increased levels of teacher confidence and understanding of teaching methodology.

> I found it really helpful when X. was able to feedback to me about what was happening in my classroom. It was also useful in talking about individual children's progress that was specific to that child and my teaching methods. (Year 2 teacher)

> I liked being able to celebrate tiny successes with X. and I learned a lot because of the questions that she constantly asked. I felt more confident and I am sure that my knowledge of what was happening to me and the children improved, because it was very focused. (English co-ordinator)

The external adviser supported the teachers by facilitating the construction of shared understandings and meanings, at an individual level, between members of a subject or age phase department and across departments during the 'progress meetings'. This was focused on extending the skills, understanding and agreement on practice between teachers. The work of Miles et al, (1988) explains why this form of internal support is so important, as it assists in the building of confidence and trust, mediating conflict, offering support and generating collaboration.

The senior management team also believe that this helped them to be certain that what was happening in classrooms was focused on real, rather than perceived, needs and that there were consistent whole school effects.

> X. has helped us to evaluate and gauge the impact on children, their learning and their progress. Also the change has been co-ordinated and coherent across all of the teachers, which we have never achieved before. (Maths co-ordinator & member of SMT)

> I think that this is the first time that we have done something that we are all involved in, in that it is not just effecting small pockets of teachers but everyone. (Headteacher)

The staff were unanimous in their belief that the presence, role and methods used by the external adviser were an important aspect to the success of the change process and the quality of the outcomes.

> We saw it as an advanced form of professional development that was differentiated to meet the needs of each teachers and their particular sets of children. The adviser's role was to develop individual teacher's knowledge and skills within the context of their classroom demands, to provide support but also to be challenging. The final bit of the process was for the adviser to agree with each teacher what he or she would attempt next and then to support him or her through this. It has been expensive but we think that we have had value for money.
>
> (Deputy headteacher)

> There has also been an additional benefit that we were totally unaware of and had never considered. Because of the way that we now feel, we have already begun to put other things into action. In the past, we have always done one thing, evaluated it, and then moved onto the next. It was a sort of stop and start process. Now we are moving from one thing to the next, but I am not sure why, but its working – so I don't knock it. (Head of nursery)

The headteacher summarised the outcomes by saying:

> Teacher short term planning has improved with better differentiation of learning. The quality and accuracy of teacher assessments have improved. All of the teachers, to some extent or another, are using a wider range of teaching methods and forms of organisation of the children and time. The targets that are being set and agreed with the children seem to be motivational and there is emerging evidence in improvement in on-task behaviour and children's progress. We obviously need to monitor this closely and for a longer period of time, but without doubt there is a very positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Best of all, all the staff believe that they are successful.
>
> The other thing that we hadn't considered when we started all of this, is the way that we have grown in confidence and ability, not to just manage this change but to consider the next. It feels as if we have climbed onto an elevator, because we already know what we are moving into next. The amazing things is that we have begun the next development, even before we've finished this change. That is quite exciting and yet it all feels as if it is in our control.
>
> (Headteacher)

The headteacher (P), with the agreement of the governors, senior management team and the whole teaching staff approached their external adviser, who had worked in the school for four years. P. believed that the external adviser's presence and actions in the school in the previous years, had been seen to contribute directly to capacity building and change. She knew that the adviser was liked and trusted by the teachers. She also recognised that the provision of additional and a slightly different type of external support could possibly assist the school in moving through a different phase of development. The adviser was commissioned to work with the headteacher and senior management team to analyse and integrate the new practices with the current

practices, by challenging and questioning existing practices; to provide professional supportive pressure to test out new ideas and to maintain the momentum for innovation and change. The final aspect of the role was to provide evaluative feedback that could build confidence, provide support and mediate any conflict or anxiety. Table 4 describes this process.

Table 4 Stages of the successful improvement process in school 4.

1. Creating the internal conditions for successful improvement	
2. Building individual teacher capacity	
3. Negotiation	
4. Developing momentum and coherence	
5. Sustaining momentum	
6. Initiating the second curve of change – anticipation and foresight.	
7. Embedding the second curve of improvement	• Teachers adjust pedagogic approaches; • Development of an entrepreneurial approach that facilitates the combination of external and internal support for professional development; • Building organisational capacity; • Understanding the organisational capacity for sustaining change and how to enhance it.

After the improvement process

As with school 3. the teachers were able to describe a number of differences in the way that they teach or organise classrooms and the consequences for the children.

The headteacher summed up what the teachers were saying by adding:

> ….the major difference to the past, is that the teaching behaviour of the staff has changed. By this, I mean that there is a different attitude to how we teach. There is a greater focus on children's learning and not on preparing for tests and exams. Of course, we are using pupil performance data, but at its widest sense, to help us analyse and assess what each child needs next. (Headteacher of School 4)

In common with each of the schools, there was frequently an over estimation of the impact of change during the short term and an underestimation in the longer term. Whilst the teachers were monitoring the quality of the teaching and learning conceptual links about how to improve effectives of teaching and learning were made. effective teaching and learning were made.

> ……..realised that good teaching is actually the same as good learning.
> (Year 4 teacher – School 4)

As a consequence the teachers are now actively examining and changing the ways in that children, "Access information, develop ideas, express themselves and their ways of thinking."

> This means that when we thought that what we were doing last term wasn't having an effect on the curriculum, we were wrong. We now realise that this is having an effect on every subject, as each subject leader and team of teachers have to look again at what we are teaching. Its no good saying that we care about thinking, if children follow a textbook and are never allowed or challenged to think.
> (Maths co-ordinator and member of SMT at School 4)

A large majority (84.16%) of the teachers talked about developing children's thinking and communication skills in all subjects across the curriculum and 89.42% believed that the children are encouraged to think and talk more about their own learning and are more independent as learners. The teachers were unanimous about the fact that they think more about how they teach, than before.

There were three aspects of teacher behaviour in school 4. that had not been observed in the other three schools. These were a greater involvement in other teacher's work, spending more time observing and monitoring other colleagues and thinking more about the process of learning compared to the past. The headteacher believed that the teachers were "happier and more motivated and had also gaining a lot of job satisfaction."

The staff were agreed that this was probably due to the involvement of the external adviser, who had not only supported them in acquiring updated knowledge and skills, but had also been able to link that knowledge to successful teaching and learning processes within the classroom.

> We couldn't have done this before, as we didn't have a model to work to. Now we have started doing demonstration lessons for each other and analysing them together. This means that we are examining our own practice together. (Headteacher)

The evidence that emerged during this case study, seemed to indicate that the co-operative and communal reflection on teaching and learning in action was perceived by the teachers, to be important, relevant and practically useful. The consequence of this, for the headteacher, was that she had to manage this process.

> In order to do this, we have put, and will continue to put, extensive financial and time resources into teacher professional development..... embedding the teacher's new learning into their own practice. (Headteacher)

The headteacher and a number of the teachers talked about the fact that the strategic plan and the school development plan had been re-written, that roles and responsibilities had been re-negotiated and implemented, that the mission statement would need to be re-written after discussion and that the analytical use of monitoring data during the term had been an essential tool (rather than waiting for termly or half termly evaluation.)

> I'm no longer frightened of change and I think that we are using the change process quite successfully. Everyone is focused on the immediate innovation that we are involved in and that is right. But the SMT and I are now constantly thinking ahead about how we can improve what is happening now. In a funny sort of way, what we are doing now enables us to look ahead and looking ahead sustains the immediate things that we are working on. (Headteacher)

Summary

The headteacher, senior management team and the governors have deliberately changed the organisation, management and the strategic direction of the school. The key to their actions has been the way that the professional development of the staff has been organised, so that skills and knowledge are linked back to the classroom. The other essential action has been the school's capacity to co-ordinate the action of teachers behind agreed objectives, by ensuring that all staff are kept informed about development priorities and activities, as this information appears to be important to informed self-direction.

CASE STUDY FIVE

Introduction

The purpose of this fifth and final case study is to continue to explore the process of the improvement process in independent schools who are undertaking an episode of pedagogical improvement and if possible, to verify the relatability of the evidence that had emerged from the previous four case studies.

Two further schools were selected for this final case study. They are both non-selective independent preparatory schools, similar in size and had been involved in the exploratory study. It was known that both schools had recently undertaken an episode of pedagogical improvement and the headteachers were prepared to co-operate with this study. Both schools met the criteria that had been originally used to select the four schools involved in the first four case studies. However, the two schools were very different in a number of ways.

School X had merged with another nearby independent preparatory school, due to financial difficulties in both institutions and both had been at the point of closure due to falling pupil numbers. A new headteacher was appointed three years ago with the task of revitalising the merged schools into one successful establishment. . During the last three years, the school has undergone massive change and has now doubled its pupil numbers. Within the independent sector School X had been identified as a failing school, three years ago. It is now perceived as an effective, financially secure and improving school.

School Y is a renowned school that has waiting lists for places and a very stable staff. This was a highly effective school where the pupils achieve well above the national averages and on first sight, it has little incentive to change or improve.

Although the two schools were at the opposite end of a continuum in terms of effectiveness three years ago, they have both undertaken a period of pedagogical improvement and general change. This case study examines the similarities and differences between the two schools, and the relatability of the events and outcomes when compared with the schools in the first four case studies.

The differences between the two schools

The staff

Three years ago, both schools had very established staffing, where the average age of the teachers were 40+ years. The teachers at school X felt very demoralised and were concerned for their jobs and future careers, whilst the teachers at school Y felt confident and satisfied with their employment. Since, that time, over 60% of the staff, in school X, have left; due to dismissal, promotion or retirement. Newly qualified teachers and teachers with up to five years experience have replaced the original staff; and as the school has grown, additional members of staff have been recruited. The staff in school Y have remained constant with the exception of one new appointment.

School X has had a new headteacher, who was given a very clear brief by the governors, to save the school "by any means." Whereas, the headteacher of school Y has been in post for ten years and was perceived to be a successful headteacher by his staff, governors and the parents.

The pupils

School X was seen to be failing and parents were removing their children from the school. Numbers dropped by 30% within the year, before the appointment of the new headteacher. During the last three years the decline in the numbers of pupils has been halted and reversed, so that the overall numbers have increased by 50%. Whilst

school Y has always had a demand for places and there is a "first come, first served." waiting list system. School Y has been outperforming most selective state and independent schools in the Key Stage National Tests, Common Entrance and other examination indicators for a considerable number of years.

The curriculum and professional development

Both schools were following and continue to follow the National Curriculum and use aspects of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies. School X attempted to follow the curriculum documentation almost word by word, whereas school Y paid cursory attention to the documentation. There had been no professional development on the curriculum, teaching or learning for over six years in school X. School Y had a policy of supporting teachers who wished to take part in the local education authority courses that were available at the local teacher's centre or any training that was available for individual teachers provided by IAPS. However, this was not a planned programme linked to the school development plan.

Pedagogy

Teaching was perceived to be poor within school X and staff and governors believed that there was a desperate need to improve both teaching and learning, in order to ensure the school's survival. School Y was perceived to be a successful, high performance school, however, there was a feeling amongst the staff that their more able children were not making the progress that they should and that there needed to be some small rather minor changes, in order to address this issue. There was also a recognition that information technology was not being used effectively and that much of the learning required little response from the children.

Bottom-up and top-down pressure for improvement

In school X there was a clear top-down imperative to improve what was happening in the school, in order to ensure its survival. There was enormous pressure for improvement and change from the parents, the governors and the local bank and suppliers to the school.

In school Y the demands for change were gentler and quite subtle. The suggestions for change came from some of the teachers, who knew that there needed to be further developments. However, these subtle hints would not have been implemented without the support and leadership of the headteacher. There was no external pressure for change or improvement, although there was an awareness that the school was due to inspected in the near future.

The similarities between the two schools

Introducing and managing pedagogical improvement

Both schools decided to undertake pedagogical improvement, but for very different reasons. Although they did not move through the following process at the same rate, pace or time and implemented and managed aspects of improvement in different ways, there are a number of principle similarities.

Recognising the problem or the need for pedagogical improvement:

The headteachers of both schools recognised that they had a problem or an issue for improvement, in terms of teaching and learning that needed to be addressed. Although the difference in type and magnitude of these problems were enormous.

> First of all, it was to do with recognising that we needed to make dramatic changes in order for the school to survive financially. Secondly, the audit that we carried out showed that we needed to improve the quality and standards of teaching and learning. If you like, we recognised that we had a problem. (Headteacher: school X)

> We could have carried on in the same old way..... also we knew that Inspection was coming and we all knew that things were not absolutely right. (Headteacher: school Y)

The two headteachers decided that the most appropriate action was to focus on improving the quality of teaching in order to improve the standards of learning. The two schools could have undertaken other superficial or marginal actions, such as making improvements in the learning environment or improving resources. Indeed, this might have been an attractive proposition to school X., however, the staff of the school believed that the difficulties would only be resolved by dealing with the real issues, rather than "superficial tinkering." Both of the headteachers believed that if the improvement was to be effective it had to be focused on issues that were at the heart of the life of the school.

> You can only sell a school (to the parents) when the teaching looks good, feels good, and is good. (Headteacher: school X)

School Y believed that because they were effective, they did not want to undertake wholesale change and needed to ensure that the improvements were tightly focused and specific. Improvement at the margins was not believed to be appropriate.

> We all agreed that perhaps we needed to look at our basic skills as teachers and refresh ourselves. (Headteacher: school Y)

Conversely, school X believed that the situation was so bad, that they did not have the luxury of time to slowly undertake improvement at the margins. They believed that their energy and finance had to be focused on dramatic improvement in the pupil's learning outcomes.

> I could have splashed the paint all around – but it wouldn't attract new parents. The teaching felt tired, mundane, boring and low quality. Therefore, our objective as to improve this. (Headteacher: school X)

Creating the right conditions for pedagogical improvement:

Both of the schools addressed this issue with similar methods. School X commissioned an external adviser to work with the senior management team to audit the strengths and weaknesses of the standards of teaching, learning and pupil achievement. An action plan was agreed with the staff and then implemented. The external adviser was employed to organise and lead a range of professional development workshops, where the objective was to improve teacher's knowledge and skills in specific areas of instructional methods. The external adviser also coached, mentored and worked alongside individual teachers in their classrooms, providing individual confidential developmental feedback. The purpose of this was to support teachers as they practised and tried out new approaches with the children.

> The secret was the programme of staff development, because without improving their knowledge and skills……. After the first two terms of general workshops and A. (external adviser) working alongside the teachers, we then agreed that she would work with specific people during the second year – supporting them in developing and applying this new knowledge. So she returned to working with the teachers – but not at the extensive level of the first year, this was very focused and was designed to meet the very specific needs of teachers. They were involved in the discussions and diagnosis of their own needs with A. There were no written or verbal reports to me – her job was to help the teachers. (Headteacher: school X)

Whilst this was happening, the headteacher, governors and the senior management team also addressed a range of critical issues, such as ensuring that the physical conditions of the school were improved and that the financial situation was stabilised. Difficult decisions and actions were taken about those teachers who were found to be incompetent. A range of strategies were used to aggressively market the school and to re-build relationships with all stakeholders, especially the parents.

School, Y also employed an external adviser, recommended to them by IAPS, whom organised and led workshops and supported teachers in the classroom to put their new learning into practice.

We began with a series of workshops on planning, differentiation, teacher assessment, classroom management and teaching and learning styles and methods. These were either one day or twilight workshops over three terms. In the meantime, B made her visits to the school (two days each half term) where she spent time in classrooms. She focused on English and maths teaching during the first year. She would observe a lesson then meet with the teacher and discuss what had happened. Sometimes she would demonstrate a lesson beginning or ending or something like that. What was said between her and the teacher was confidential. But it was always agreed that she and the teacher would negotiate and agree an objective for improvement for her next visit and she would them observe this and give feedback. (Headteacher: school Y)

This combined approach was seen to be effective as it linked teachers previous experience, thinking and beliefs with their new knowledge to their actions in the classroom. The headteachers said that they did not have the specific skills to lead this capacity building and that they needed external support coupled with their own determination, which was perceived as pressure by some of the staff, to meet the internal needs of the school. The capacity building was focused on the instructional behaviour of the teachers with the prime objective of improving the learning process and outcomes.

It also seems that it was important that there were designated people in both schools who were actually ensuring that the plans were being implemented, maintained, monitored and evaluated.

The final aspect in developing the right conditions was the involvement of teachers at each stage of the process and the use of the school's own data about teacher and pupil performance, which made both the need for the improvement and the progress of the improvement process meaningful to the teachers.

> The success of the first improvement to teaching became infectious. We all wanted to repeat it. Secondly, I think that by improving the knowledge, skills and confidence of the staff and the improvements in their conditions of work and employment, plus the higher expectations that they all had developed from the staff development programme, ensured that we didn't stop – it just sort of kept going but changed direction and pace. (Headteacher: school X)

Moving pedagogical improvement into effective school improvement and the effective management of change

> It is to do with the original staff development programme. By improving the staff's knowledge and confidence, this led to increased involvement in what was happening in other areas of the life of the school. Communications and expectations had changed and this meant that the teachers felt more personal commitment to the school, which was different to before.
>
> (Headteacher: school Y)

The headteacher of school Y was now faced with an interesting dilemma. The original plan had seen the pedagogical improvements as a series of actions that would lead to an outcome and that would be the end of the matter. However, in taking part in the process, the attitudes, values and expectations of the teachers had changed and there was no opportunity of returning to "how things had been before."

> It was rare to talk about teaching before, we talked about dates, sports day and organisational issues. We still talk about those but now we also spend most of our time talking about children's learning and how we can improve it. (Headteacher: school Y)

The next "logical and common sense step" seemed to be to introduce teacher appraisal and to develop a strategic plan, with the governors, that was focused on the continuing improvement of the learning process and learner's outcomes. The school then decided to extend their new approach to staff development by introducing a programme of continuous professional development. This capacity building programme was seen as important, as it integrated prior skills and knowledge to new methods. At the same time, the senior management team began to develop the organisation of the school by focusing on the roles and responsibilities of the "middle managers" in the school, by introducing specific training for this group and encouraging and enabling them to monitor their subject being taught across the school. This enabled teachers to cross divides within the school, which would have been unthinkable in the recent past.

A similar step by step process also happened in school X, where there was a rapid

move towards a more strategic and collaborative approach to managing improvements in pedagogy, by developing the confidence and skills of the subject and key stage teams.

> We had this idea that if we worked as teams we could share the successes and solve the problems, but also learn from our failures. In this way, we could use problems and failures as a way of improving people rather than seeing it as an obstacle or a personal fault of some individual. (Headteacher: school X)

This strategy also enabled the teachers to evaluate conflicting evidence more professionally and less emotionally. Inevitably the focus on teaching and learning has led to changes in the curriculum within both schools.

> We are looking at changes in the curriculum, such as how we use IT and links between subjects. (Headteacher: school X)

> We are moving into a period of looking at how we can accelerate children's learning by the grouping and setting of children – and also at how we use time. (Headteacher: school Y)

The headteachers believe that the focus and reflection on specific teaching models appears to accelerate learning, according to the pupil performance data of these two schools. The success of this, they believe, then appears to have led to developments at an organisational, structural, curricular and whole school management level.

> We are definitely on a second curve…….. we didn't go back to square one after our successful pedagogical improvement and say "what's next?" Instead we built on that development and continued the moves forward. The school has been strengthened but I think that we work more strategically than before. (Headteacher: school X)

> Change in a successful traditional school like this was difficult to approach but once we got it set up right, then each step followed on logically. It's to do with people, people, people.

> We now recognise that we can continue to improve and change whilst retaining what is seen as unique to our school. (Headteacher: school Y)

Summary

The purpose of this fifth and final case study was to investigate and verify the relatability of the evidence that had emerged from the previous four case studies.

It appears that although there were no agreed 'blue-prints of methods or strategies '

for pedagogical or school improvement, there may be a set of principles arising out of the experiences of the original four schools and the two additional schools, who were the focus of this fifth and final case study:

<u>Developing the capacity of individual teachers in order to establish the core ideas of pedagogical improvement:</u>

- The improvements need to be focused on direct and specific instructional methods and actions that will support the development of teachers in the classroom and be at the heart of what is perceived to be important by teachers;

- The headteacher and other managers need to begin to develop the conditions within schools to overcome inertia or resistance;

- This could be achieved by using the evidence arising from pupil progress data to highlight the overall age phase or subject needs to establish the imperative for improvement in pedagogy;

- Diffused professional development is required in order to develop the capacity of teachers at two levels:

- New knowledge and skills at instructional level;
- The application, testing and trialling of the new knowledge and skills in the context of the classroom, the needs of the children and the school.

- Evidence arising from pupil progress data can be used to maintain and accelerate the improvement process;

- Internal and external support can be a key element for the capacity building of the staff;

- Leaders and managers need to understand the process of school improvement and see each objective in the School Development Plan is part of a sequential process leading to the effective management of change, rather than isolated events which have to be achieved and ticked off as accomplished.

<u>Managing change as a tool for school improvement:</u>

- Leaders and managers should move towards a more strategic and collaborative approach by developing the knowledge, skills, roles and responsibilities of the key stage, age phase and subject teams;

- Leaders and managers need to concentrate on the learning process by understanding that the pupil performance results are symptoms and not problems. Setting goals and objectives will not help. Analysing what caused the results and then teaching teachers (by building their capacity) and improving learning processes will;

- Quality in learning is defined by children, teachers and parents. When the teacher and the child enjoy teaching and learning, extrinsic motivators like grades, prizes, examination results and threats become less powerful than the intrinsic motivation of wanting to achieve the minimum of the child's previous best.

- Learning outcomes are produced by vision. Leadership, management and control is not exercised by rules and procedures, it is achieved by agreeing on shared values and vision, so that teachers know what to do to improve without being told or just relying on previous experience. It is important that children are involved in the setting of rules and values in their class and school and that the parents (customers) must be involved;

- The whole system must change, not just parts of the system. Teachers working in a system cannot do better than the school structure and procedures allow. This implies that teachers working to implement pedagogical improvement risk frustration and struggle, because he or she may have changed, but the system has not. The results in terms of improving learning outcomes happen when the structures and systems change, which means that all parts of the organisation collaborate on agreed-upon outcomes. This involves parents, children, teachers, headteachers and governors working together.

Taken together, the findings that have emerged through the five case studies indicate that whatever pedagogical improvement strategy is used by independent schools, the process needs to impact on the internal conditions and build the capacity of the teachers and the school. It appears that this can be particularly successful if the classroom improvements are specifically focused on improving and sustaining the quality of the learning process and the learner's outcomes . The following chapter will discuss these findings.

Understanding the Processes and Outcomes of Planned Pedagogical Improvement in Independent Preparatory Schools

Chapter 5: The discussion of findings

Introduction

The purpose of the research and the thesis was to explore the change process that was occurring in a small group of independent preparatory schools as they moved through a series of phases of change during a pedagogical improvement process. The research was intended to be exploratory and illuminative. This discussion chapter explores the evidence from the case studies and discusses whether the findings could be related to the experience of other independent schools.

A central theme of this study is the dynamic between improvements in classroom practice and the concomitant modification to school organisational arrangements. The case studies examine and analyse the essence of the change processes that the six schools had experienced during implementing a process of pedagogical improvement.

Earlier in the thesis, I explained why I have used the work of Barth, Harris and Hopkins as a theoretical framework to structure the data collection, analysis and interpretation. In this chapter, the discussion is structured on Barth's (1990) assumptions about improvement and the reasons for this are discussed in the following section.

Barth's statements generally subsume the study's research questions (see chapter 3, the methodology) and these assumptions have enabled me to describe and analyse the processes that occurred. Barth believed that:

- Schools have the capacity to improve themselves, if the conditions are right;
- When the need and purpose is there, when the conditions are right, adults and students alike learn and each energises and contributes to the learning of the other;

- What needs to be improved about schools is their culture, the quality of interpersonal relationships, and the nature and quality of learning experiences;

- School improvement is an effort to determine and provide, from without and within, conditions under which the adults and youngsters who inhabit schools will promote and sustain learning among them.

Do schools have the capacity to improve themselves, if the conditions are right?

The evidence from the case studies indicates that successful school improvement is dependent on the school's ability to manage change and development. Hopkins (2001) suggests 'real' improvement is best regarded as a strategy for educational change that focuses on student achievement by modifying arrangements within the school to support teaching and learning. In addition, Harris believes that:

> …this necessitates building the 'capacity' for change and development within the school as an organisation. Building the capacity for school improvement necessitates paying careful attention to how collaborative processes in schools are fostered and developed.
>
> (Harris: 2002:47)

The outcomes of the first four case studies indicated that capacity building is concerned with creating the conditions, opportunities and experiences for development and mutual learning. It implies that "individuals feel confident in their own capacity, in the capacity of their colleagues and in the capacity of the school to promote professional development" (Mitchell and Sackney, 2000:21).

Newmann, King and Young (2000:71) define school capacity as "the collective competency of the school as an entity to bring about effective change".

As was explained and developed in chapter 3 (the methodology) the driving questions behind my research have been about whether independent schools can improve the quality of teaching and learning and, if so, how do they do this? The findings from the case studies do point to the fact that there is some form of developmental sequence that schools go through in order to become more effective, but this process is

sometimes fragile. Of the six schools involved in the study, four of them managed the improvement process effectively, one made moves towards improvement and school 2. actually declined in terms of relationships and effectiveness. It may be useful, therefore, to examine what happened in school 2. in comparison with the others, in order to discuss the issues arising from the question.

Schools 3., 4., X and Y believe that they created the right conditions by identifying and recognising that improving children's learning and learning outcomes had to be at the centre of whatever strategies they would implement. They collectively agreed the objectives that were focused on improving teaching and learning and linked staff development to this process. As was seen in the evidence from the final phase of the improvement process in the case studies (where the headteachers and teachers reflected on the improvement process) they believe that the actions that they took enabled them to, albeit unknowingly at the time, change or develop the "value" chain.

The "value chain" is the interlinking system of values and beliefs held by teachers at an individual level about their work in classrooms and at a collective level about the practices within their school.

The development of common beliefs, a commitment to shared goals and to developing a clarity in understanding the goals being implemented, are commonly advocated components of the change and improvement process. They are seen as essential to developing confidence and consistency among a community of teachers. (MacGilchrist et al. 1997, Reynolds 1996; Stoll 1991; Stoll and Fink 1992, 1996)

Educational leaders are viewed as vital to the development of motivating values and

visions. There is a strong sense in much of the literature that the vision and values are primarily the headteacher's vision and values, which are to be articulated but maybe not developed. Although this is not to dispute the importance of vision, values, shared purpose and direction amongst a school staff, it seems that the crucial question, as asked by Hargreaves (1994), is "whose values and vision is this?"

The headteacher of school 2. had a strong belief in the school and a clear set of goals for the future development and direction of the school, which had been recommended by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI). However, these goals, objectives and the underpinning values were never discussed with the whole staff. There was a level of acceptance that there would be inevitable general agreement because it was about improving teaching and learning. Deal and Peterson (1987) write about the problems caused when the proprietary claims and attitudes suggest an ownership of the school and of change, which is individual rather than collective, imposed rather than earned, and hierarchical rather than democratic. There was a singular vision in school 2. and teachers learned to suppress their opinions, which led to the leadership and management of the school becoming manipulative.

This does not mean that headteacher's values and visions are unimportant, but ultimately the vision building, and decisions on improvement should be collective. Collaboration should mean creating the vision together, not complying with the headteacher's or someone else's, as Hargreaves (1994) discusses.

The lack of ownership, agreement and clarification about the underlying objectives, principles and purposes of the planned improvement in teaching was also exacerbated by the introduction of new teaching strategies that the teachers did not necessarily believe were needed or appropriate and the development of a veneer of collaboration,

but where the teachers had no power or voice in the decision making process.

> This transformation in our ways of knowing in many respects marks a movement from cultures of certainty to cultures of uncertainty. This diminishing credibility of traditional knowledge bases along with declining certainty attached to research expertise has immense implications for education and its restructuring. (Hargreaves, 1994:25)

As the other five schools embarked on their episode of planned pedagogical improvement , there appeared to be agreement about the need and validity for this specific change and the impact that it could have on what teachers perceived to be, their core task. All of the schools, with the exception of school 2., had used pupil performance and progress data to highlight or justify the imperative for the improvement.

The consideration of *why* the planned improvement is taking place appears to be as important as *how* it will be implemented and managed, and be a crucial aspect of creating the right conditions.

At the beginning of the second case study, school 2. appeared to be in a similar situation to the other schools. However, over a few weeks, the "strategic compliers" on the staff, who had previously formed an alliance with the headteacher, felt threatened by the changes. They perceived that these changes were too general and wide ranging and that they were personally threatening. Perhaps the fact that pupil progress data was not used as a justifying factor, deprived teachers of a tool to measure the success and failure of the improvement process generally, and did not enable them to maintain an emphasis and focus on the learner specifically. These teachers believed that the spotlight was on them as teachers at a personal level and that this was de-skilling and led to a breakdown in communications and relationships. As a consequence, the "strategic compliers" joined forces with the smaller group of previously marginalised "unwilling compliers". This alliance provided formidable

resistance to the improvement process and the headteacher. It appears that the school was not ready to begin to undertake major changes in pedagogy as this was professionally and personally threatening to the staff.

The headteacher in school 1. talked about the modification of the improvement action plan both before and during the improvement process, in order to meet and solve the staff's concerns and anxieties, and of the importance of the constant interchange of professional information and the involvement of the teachers at both a formal and an informal level.

The sensitive involvement of staff in the decision making process leading to planned pedagogical improvement and during the stages of implementation coupled with the rigorous focus on the learning process and learners' outcomes appears to overcome inertia and resistance to improvement and to provide impetus to the process itself.

Evidence from this research, coupled with what is already known from other experiences and studies, such as Improving the Quality of Education for All (IQEA), the Halton project (Stoll and Fink, 1992), the Accelerated Schools Project (Levin 1993), the IMTEC approach to institutional development in Norway (Dalin et al. 1993) and the work of Harris 2000; Hopkins et al. 1996; Hopkins 2001, 1987, 1990 and van Velzen et al. 1985 demonstrate that schools do have the capacity to improve themselves but that school improvement involves cultural change and that this is best achieved by working on the internal conditions within each individual school. (Hopkins et al. 1994).

The teachers in five of the schools believed that there were three main benefits. Firstly, the improvement process had led directly to personal and professional development, which had created a climate for stimulating practice. This in turn had

resulted in improved morale and also built professional confidence that led to a positive mood. High morale appeared to be produced by staff cohesiveness and a sense of camaraderie was brought about through formal and informal support.

Secondly, the atmosphere of openness and a sense of common responsibility provided teachers with a focus, which instigated social and academic support for the children.

Thirdly, during the first part of the capacity building process, improvement, the teachers were able to develop their knowledge and understanding of teaching. This improvement in knowledge and understanding was mostly focused on teaching methods, organisation of the children or generic issues that impacted on all subjects and age groups, such as planning or assessment. Using the definition for teaching from chapter one in this thesis, it seemed that they were improving their knowledge of methods and learning how to improve and to maximise the classroom setting, to improve the quality and appropriateness of tasks and activities, to improve the quantity and quality of interactions with the children and to develop the assessment and judgement process.

The second phase of this process was when the teachers were then supported, by an external adviser, to try out these methods in their classrooms. This second phase appeared to encourage the teachers to attempt to implement their learning from the professional development workshops, and to personalise and adapt the methods to suit their own and their children's needs and the context of their classroom and school. However, at this point, none of the teachers were improving their knowledge of pedagogy. As I attempted to make clear, in the introduction to this thesis, pedagogy is more than just being a good teacher or being able to implement a range of teaching methods. It includes all the professional methodological knowledge of teaching as

well as an understanding of the nature of childhood, how children learn, and the structure of knowledge.

The evidence from schools 3. and 4. indicates that those teachers who began to develop their pedagogical knowledge and understanding, appeared to do so during a later stage of the improvement process. It seems that this was caused by two inter-related events. Firstly, the continuing relationship with and support from the external adviser at classroom level; which was reinforced by the development at school level in terms of structure and organisation. This combination of actions seemed to encourage teachers to look beyond their own classroom and children or subject, which enabled a contingent discourse to take place on children, learning, the structure of knowledge and the culture of the school. It was at this point that there appeared to be improvements in pedagogy.

How do adults learn, as part of the capacity building process, and what contribution can this have for the learning of children?

This second structuring question arises out of Barth's second assumption. He believed that, " when the need and purpose is there, when the conditions are right, adults and students alike learn and each energises and contributes to the learning on the other". Evidence from the case studies indicated that how independent school teachers manage their curricula and the organisation of the classroom was dictated by their awareness of their own skills within the context of the school but was also obedient to their professional beliefs about themselves as people and as professionals, and about the nature of pupil learning and intellectual development. It seemed that issues connected with what happens when human beings learn, in ways thought likely to profit them over the long term, are at the heart of pedagogy.

Therefore, this section will focus on how the teachers appeared to be learning and the implications of this for the children.

As was discussed in the section above, those schools that experienced some success in managing change had focused on improving teaching and learning. School Y was a very successful school and yet still believed that some of its pupils' potential for learning was not being fully exploited. The other schools were either perceived as failing schools or schools that had been through a difficult period and were now stabilised; however, all these schools believed that the children's progress and achievement could be enhanced by improving and developing the learners' range and repertoire of learning strategies. In order to achieve this, there was a recognition that the teachers' knowledge, understanding and skills had to be developed. Teachers underwent a learning process which modelled and illustrated good teacher/learner processes which could be exemplified in the classroom. Four of the external advisers adapted some or all of the models of learning in their classroom support activities, which strengthened teachers' developing understanding of pedagogy. The act of being an effective learner was a powerful experience for many of the teachers.

Bruner (1990) identifies four "dominant models of learning":

- seeing the learner as imitative learners;
- seeing the learner as learning from didactic exposure;
- seeing the learner as a thinker;
- seeing the learner as knowledgeable.

The prefix 'seeing' is important, as Bruner is characterising the way in which, in educational contexts, learners and their capacities have been defined by those who are teaching them, whatever those capacities are.

<u>Seeing the teacher-learner as an imitative learner</u> – is the basis of apprenticeship, a system for 'leading the novice into the skilled ways of the expert'. Expertise requires

practice, and implies not just prepositional or procedural knowledge but also talents, skills and abilities. The schools that employed the knowledge and skills of an external adviser, who supported teachers in testing out and trialling their newly acquired knowledge in their own classroom or subject context, were actually providing for this. The teachers were able to observe the external adviser demonstrating a range of teaching strategies which they were then able to practise, in the 'safety' of their own classroom. This link between newly acquired or deepened and strengthened pedagogical knowledge is important in terms of building individual teacher capacity. There was also some limited evidence that if teachers successfully experienced this approach themselves as learners or novices, that they were more likely to apply it in the classroom with the children, as teachers.

<u>Seeing teacher-learners as learning from didactic exposure</u> – informs the classic transmission model of teaching; it is heavily geared to the acquisition of facts, principles and rules, and presumes that learners are not knowledgeable until they have demonstrated that they can recall and repeat the facts, principles and rules in question. This does not presume that the learner is ignorant or unable to learn but that they have yet to meet this new knowledge.

The external advisers who worked in schools 4., X and Y used elements of didactic teaching, by explaining and transmitting their own knowledge of the principles of learning and the structure of knowledge and often questioned teachers about their own knowledge and understanding. For some teachers this revealed a poor knowledge of learning theory and knowledge theory, which was addressed by the external adviser. The majority of teachers in the case study schools were comfortable with didactic methods but through their learning with the external adviser were encouraged to think

about scholarly and taught knowledge, and the way in which the subject knowledge to be taught adapts, remoulds and sometimes disfigures elements borrowed from the broader field of subject knowledge.

School Y had a lively debate about finding effective ways to scaffold between Vygotsky's 'natural' and 'cultural' lines of development and move the child via his or her understanding to those embodied in the mature forms of understanding central to the culture and content of the subject.

Seeing teacher-learners as thinkers – presupposes that learners can and do think for themselves, that it is the task of the teacher or trainer to uncover and understand that thinking; and through discussion and a "pedagogy of mutuality" (Bruner, 1990) they can assist the learner to move from a private to a shared frame of reference. The main pedagogical tool is dialogic discourse. The external advisers who worked in schools 3., 4., X and Y encouraged teachers to think, discuss and reflect on what they were doing, whilst they were trying out new or improved teaching methods. There was a deep level of pedagogical discourse about the purposes of education, the nature of children and the nature of learning. It is impossible to verify whether this had a definite or related impact on the children within the schools. However, my belief was that as teachers' understanding of the learning process was developed, they were becoming more effective as teachers, and in turn were learning about teaching from the reaction and response of the children, although I could not prove this.

Seeing teacher- learners as knowledgeable - starts with the premise that in any school culture, there is a "given" knowledge, that knowledge is not exclusively personal or intersubjective or relative, and that it is the teacher's or trainer's task to help learners grasp the distinction between personal knowledge and "what is taken to be known" by

the school culture. The external advisers in two of the schools stressed that the teaching and learning strategies are embedded in the schemes of work and curriculum content that teachers use to structure the learning in their lessons. This inevitably led to two of the schools re-examining aspects of the curriculum and their schemes of work.

This method of developing the capacity of teachers assumes a whole school dimension, through the staff development infrastructure that the schools had established. It required careful attention to consistency of teaching, and the discussion of pedagogy was placed into the context of the culture and the needs of the children of the individual schools.

Hopkins (2001) writes of an interesting parallel with the experience of school improvement in Japan, 'Report on the Teaching Gap' (Stigler and Hiebert, 1999). According to Stigler and Hiebert, the dominant form of in-service training is the lesson study. In lesson study, groups of teachers meet regularly over long period of time to work on the design implementation, testing and improvement of one or several research lessons. By all indications, report Stigler and Hiebert, lesson study is extremely popular and highly valued by Japanese teachers and is the linchpin of the improvement process. Stigler and Hiebert (1999:53) maintain that the premise behind lesson study is simple:

> If you want to improve teaching, the most effective place to do so is in the context of a classroom lesson. If you start with lessons, the problem of how to apply research findings in the classroom disappears. The improvements are devised within the classroom in the first place. The challenge now becomes that of identifying the kinds of changes that will improve student learning in the classroom and, once the changes are identified, of sharing this knowledge with other teachers who face similar problems, or share similar goals, in the classroom.

The capacity building of individual teachers through professional development, in

most of the case study schools was characterised by a concentration on development as falling into two phases. The first phase was to develop teachers' knowledge and understanding through their participation in whole school workshops that were focused on enhancing learning processes, learning outcomes and pedagogy, led by an external adviser/trainer. The second phase was the practising and testing out of this new knowledge in classrooms, with the support of the external adviser. This diffused approach enabled the external adviser to support teachers' experiences so that they became confident enough to draw on colleagues' experiences to formulate strategies and to find ways of helping each other to evaluate and learn from their own and other teachers' lessons and classroom experiences.

This capacity to change through professional development was not evident in the first two schools and was limited in school 3. However, there does seem to be evidence that points to the importance of building the capacity of individual teachers which goes beyond attending isolated and one-off professional development events. Teachers appear to need to feel that they are successful and are achieving maximum or optimum improvement, in order to embed their new learning into their day-to-day practices. This appears to sustain the improvements in pedagogy and to move the actions from being tactical to strategic.

There have been many others who have looked at linking improved professional development to school improvement. For instance, since 1991 Bruce Joyce has talked about a series of individual teacher approaches to school improvement through staff development. Joyce (1991) argued that this could be a process that could eventually change the culture of a school substantially. He maintained that single approaches such as attending courses or following the traditional pattern of staff development) are

unlikely to be as powerful an agent for school improvement as a synthesis of approaches.

The implicit assumption made by Joyce (1991) at that time, was that each of these synthesised actions connect and lead to school improvement. In reality, as was seen in schools 1. and 2. in the case studies, this is not always the case. In these schools, improvement strategies tended to focus on individual changes and individual teachers and classrooms, rather than how these changes can fit in with and adapt the organisation and ethos of the school. Because of their singular nature they fail, to a greater or lesser degree, to affect the culture of the school. The other factor is that often the single approach to staff development is conducted in isolation from the conditions and the objectives of the school improvement/development plan.

Joyce and Calhoun (1995) see student achievement at the core of successful staff development. The discussions with the two headteachers of schools X and Y seemed to confirm the ideas and models that were developed by Joyce. The theory that has emerged from these case studies suggests that as the schools moved through the first stages of authentic school improvement by focusing on pedagogical change, the headteachers and senior managers had to fulfil certain requirements. In creating the right conditions, recognising the problems and agreeing objectives that were focused on improving teaching and learning and linking staff development to this process, they were changing the value systems and beliefs of both the individual teachers and the school.

A further exploration of the literature and theory shows that there could be an element of confusion or indecision about what comes first: developing the internal conditions or building the capacity of the staff. However, it appeared from these schools that

developing the capacity of the individual teachers was an aspect of the process of developing the internal conditions of the school; and that it was not an "either/or" situation. Naturally, changes or improvements within classrooms or the quality of teaching were not happening during this period, as there needs to be an investment and a conscious allowance of time in building knowledge, understanding and consensus through applying new understanding. Even in school Y, which was a highly successful school, there was still this need for consideration, practice, reflection before acceptance and assimilation.

There have been criticisms directed at the models of teaching reviewed by Joyce and Weil (1986). The criticism focused on the fact that this approach may foster dependency and inflexibility amongst those who use it (Smyth and Garman, 1989:11). They said that:

> Efforts to improve teacher effectiveness, and to implement policies of evaluating and promoting teachers based on their presumed effectiveness, have actually been based not on broad criteria of effectiveness at all but on particular and limited versions of it, indeed on versions that may actually inhibit the growth of effective characteristics and behaviour of other kinds among teachers.

Joyce and Showers (1988) were also criticised on the grounds that their work on peer coaching "undervalues the practical insight and wisdom of teachers and requires teachers to comply with the knowledge, expertise and prescriptions that are the property and prerogative of a small cadres of scientific experts." (Hargreaves and Dawe, 1990:74)

I would agree that the imposition of singular models of teaching expertise can create inflexibility among teachers and make it hard for them to exercise proper discretionary judgements in their classrooms. As was seen in school 2., it led to teacher resistance because of implicit rejections of the worth and value of the rest of a

teacher's repertoire, and of the life and the person that has been invested in building it up. It can also lead to an overly narrow focus on particular techniques just when we are beginning to understand that effective instruction in real classroom setting involves teachers possessing a wide repertoire of teaching strategies which they apply flexibly according to the needs of the child and the moment. I also wondered, whether I was seeing effective professional development as a panacea for solving a school's problems, and reflected on this for a considerable time.

However, the evidence from three of the schools appears to indicate that if the capacity building approach, that has been described and analysed, enables multiple models of excellence to be understood and used, and if these models are grounded in the collective wisdom and experience of the community of teachers within a school; then this approach also acknowledges the context-dependent characteristics of the classroom, and is thus successful. In addition to all this, multiple models of instructional excellence also appeared to foster greater collegiality among teachers by acknowledging that teachers have "complementary instructional expertise as a basis for partnership". (Wignall and Hargreaves 1989;10)

Although the outcomes of the case studies three and four appeared to indicate that the teachers were learning and contributing to the learning of their colleagues, this seemed to be due to the actions and interventions of the external advisers, rather than learning from the children. Within four of the schools, as evaluation, analysis and reflection was encouraged and developed, the children did become the focal point for teachers learning and there was evidence that each was contributing to the learning of the other. However, I have doubts as to whether this could have been accomplished without the first phase of capacity building.

Although it was not possible to quantify the effect of the improvement process on the children, their learning and outcomes, there were a range of indicators suggesting that there was an effect or contribution towards the learning of the children. Teachers in four of the schools were prepared to talk more openly about their uncertainties and to seek shared solutions to concerns or problems. This appeared to have the repercussion of developing professional honesty, where sharing successes and failure were observed taking place. The consequence of this professional sharing is continuous teacher learning which, in turn, brings about the development of educational opportunities for children.

Five of the schools were able to show improved results in the national and independent schools examination systems at the end of key stages one and two, which were above the expectations of the schools and their value added data. It is impossible to categorically quantify and verify that this was due to improvements in teaching. However, the teachers themselves believed that there were causal links. I, therefore, thought that a way of ascertaining the effect on the children was to examine the range and type of learning methods that they were experiencing.

The teachers in five of the schools reported that they still used their "traditional" methods for fostering children's learning:

- Rote (teacher-class): drilling of facts, ideas and routines through constant repetition;

- Recitation (teacher-class or teacher-group): the accumulation of knowledge and understanding through questions designed to stimulate recall of what has been previously learned or to cue the child to work out the answer from clues provided in the question.

- Instruction/exposition(teacher-class, teacher-group or teacher-individual): telling the child what to do, and/or imparting information, and/or explaining factors or operations.

There is a danger in current educational discourse that we consign these three forms of teaching to the despised archive of traditional methods. In fact, exposition and recitation have an important role in teaching, for facts need to be imparted, information needs to be memorised and explanations need to be provided. Rote also has a place (memorising tables, rules, spelling, etc.)

However, what the teachers were excited about was the development of their

knowledge, understanding and use of:

- Scaffold dialogue and activities (teacher-class, teacher-group, teacher-individual or pupil-pupil): achieving common understanding through structured and sequenced questioning, activities and tasks, and through "joint activity and shared conceptions", which guide, prompt, reduce choices and expedite "handover" of concepts and principles.

- Discussion (pupil-pupil, with or without the teacher): talk among members of the group or class intended to enable ideas or information to be shared and problems solved.

The joint solving of problems through discussion and investigation and the achievement of common understanding through scaffolded dialogue and activities and tasks are undeniably more demanding of teacher skill than imparting information or testing recall through rote or recitation.

This development in the range and quality of teaching methods offered the children opportunities to be involved in practical, investigative and sequenced activities. The improved use of time, sequencing of learning and the organisation of the pupils provided opportunities highly effective learning.

How do schools make a cultural change in order to improve interpersonal relationships and the nature and quality of learning experiences?

> The message that comes across strongly in the literature is that improving schools are ones which have learned to manage multiple change and are moving towards the concept of a learning organisation. Clearly, this requires a radical cultural shift.
>
> (Agnes McMahon, 2001;15)

The *'stories'* told by the teachers in the six schools, summarised in the case studies, appeared to help shape behaviour by communicating theirs and the school's unwritten values.

Independent schools share many similarities with primary schools in the maintained sector. However, as the introduction attempted to summarise, independent schools also have a different history, background, legal and financial structure and 'parental-customer' expectations. Understanding the informal processes within these independent schools was vital to understanding the management of the pedagogical improvements. Therefore, the *'stories'* told by the teachers in the six schools, summarised in the case studies, had three levels of importance. The first level was that the stories assisted me as a researcher in recognising and understanding the cultural norms within each school; secondly, they helped me to draw together the unique aspects of independent schools compared to maintained schools; and thirdly, they appeared to help shape the behaviour of the teachers within these schools by communicating the unwritten values.

Mitrott and Pauchant (1988) suggested that culture is to the organisation as personality is to the individual. Deal and Kennedy (1985) described it "as the way we do things around here". Most models of culture (Schein 1985; Pauchant and Mitroff 1989; Hofstede 1991; Williams et al. 1993) agreed that it may be thought of as combining a number of distinctive layers, including individual beliefs and

assumptions, coming together in the form of shared values and operating norms and, ultimately consistent patterns of behaviour.

Fullan (1993) argues that planned change strategies are not the solution because "reality under conditions of dynamic complexity is fundamentally non-linear". He suggests that learning teachers are the key to a learning organisation and that this will require inner learning (intrapersonal sense-making) as well as outer learning (relating and collaborating with others). One means of promoting this is to invest in teachers' professional development, as mentioned in the section above. However, the evidence seems to show that this is not enough on its own.

Gray et al. (1999) concluded that a common theme of schools that were improving more rapidly was that "they had found ways of facilitating more discussion among colleagues about classroom issues than hitherto". The teachers in Rosenholtz's (1991) moving schools worked in collaborative, learning cultures. Joyce et al. (1999) argues for a model of school improvement in which the school is a learning community for teachers as well as students. The micro, school-level cultures that these writers argue for, are associated with teacher growth and learning and are ones in which teachers may be able to feel free to experiment and take risks, where collaboration is valued and time is allocated to share work, where information is used as a basis for joint enquiry and investigation and where sharing and partnership rather than competition between teachers is encouraged.

This is a delightful picture but it is not one that any of the teachers who worked in the six schools would have recognised at the beginning of the improvement process, and indeed, the philosophy of being a learning community was an anathema to them. Historically, the teachers who worked in independent schools had always been

perceived as independent, responsible, isolated and accountable for their own work and the outcomes of the children's learning, as long as it these met the required standards and expectations. The first stage or curve of improvement that began to happen, due to the capacity building process, slowly dissolved some of the traditional values and obstacles to collaboration, but the main barricades would not have been removed without the changes to the structure of the schools.

In focusing attention on individual roles and responsibilities and how these roles were carried out and could be developed, the headteachers of schools 3., 4., X and Y were able to attend to the structures of the school and make changes in a number of whole school policies, practices and processes. This was also strengthened by marrying this development with the introduction of strategic planning to support improvements in teaching and learning. They appeared to be ensuring that they were not destroying existing traditions but amending structures and making not only their staff more responsive but also more accountable and predictable.

Without this strategic focus on the structures and gaining agreement and understanding on how the individuals operated, it is unlikely that the schools would have moved beyond having a very good staff development infrastructure. Usually this process occurred for good basic and common sense reasons, but in four of the schools this stage of the improvement process became pivotal and essential to their ability to sustain pedagogical improvement and to manage educational change. Kurt Lewin (1947) talked about the influence of the organisation on the behaviour of its members and the work of Matthew Miles (1967) on organisational health focused on understanding the dynamics between the organisational condition of schools and the quality of education they provide. He believed that the basic principle that

underpinned this work was to increase communication, which will bring people to view one another in a more objective manner and also will lead them to co-operate more readily. He suggested team training, survey feedback, role workshops, target setting and supporting activities, organisational diagnosis and problem solving and organisational experiment.

Miles noted that many of these techniques "set off an attitude cycle among the participants, leading to ownership and participation in the management of the organisation". It is this approach that has been developed by Hopkins, Stoll and others in their work with schools.

Whilst observing the schools, it was interesting to observe a brief struggle between bureaucratic control and personal empowerment that marked the transition to post modernity and collaborative relationships, which was typified by the development of a "middle management team" and clearer understanding of each member of staff's role and the particular form that this would take. A pervasive theme that runs throughout the literature of shared leadership and collaborative cultures is the truism of trust. The establishment of trust, it is argued, is essential to the build-up of effective and meaningful collaborative work relationships. (Liberman et al. 1988, Loudon, 1999). However, Nias, Southworth and Yeoman (1989) argued that trust has two dimensions – predictability and common goals. For trust to exist, they argued, people must find one another highly predictable and share substantially the same aims.

I am reasonably certain that when the headteachers of the schools began to develop the structures and organisation of their schools and to undertake a strategic approach to decision-making, planning and the management of people, they had not considered

this issue. However, because of the nature of the process that the school had experienced during the first curve of improvement, the values and objectives of the improvement strategies had been agreed and teachers knew what to expect of each other, which led not just to trust, but also confidence.

A further aspect to this strengthening of the organisational structures occurred with the development of shared values by teachers, as there was a recognition that parents and the children also needed to be involved, and that they needed to be involved more than had been the common practice in the past.

Can the improvement process promote and sustain learning for the adults and the children?

The final assumption of Barth's is that "school improvement is an effort to determine and provide, from without and within, conditions under which the adults and children who inhabit schools will promote and sustain learning among them".

The evidence suggests that the schools which were improving more rapidly showed greater evidence of strategic thinking alongside their capacity building of the individual which appeared to lead to developing the capacity of the organisation.

As with the work of Gray et al. (1999), the research seems to show that in order to sustain pedagogical improvement the schools needed to be engaged in three broad approaches, which Gray characterised as tactics, strategies and capacity building. All the schools were operating in the first curve at the level of tactics. They had focused (usually for the first time) on outcome measures and identified some 'obvious' things they needed to do to improve their pupils' performance. In addition, they reinforced some of the developments by revamping their codes of classroom conduct and in the process they began to respond to the dictates of what one head called the

'improvement game'.

On reviewing the data, it seemed that the common factor in each of those schools, where there was evidence of sustainability, was the use of diffused professional development that was focused on developing the capacity of individuals, and which made the connection between developing teacher knowledge and skills to teacher practice and learner behaviour in the classroom. Capacity building appeared to be the mechanism that enabled the schools to successfully manage and sustain the pedagogical improvements. In the light of this evidence, it is worthwhile pursuing this discussion a little deeper.

<u>The two curves of managing sustainable pedagogical improvement:</u>

The evidence suggests that some of the schools are able to work at two levels during the improvement process. The first phase or curve of improvement is the process of creating the conditions for effective improvement and successfully implementing a planned episode of pedagogical improvement. The second phase or curve begins with the actions that will enable this process to be embedded into the day to day management and values of the school and classroom practice; and that will enable the innovation to become independently sustainable, without constant nurturing by the leader(s) and the teachers. It seems that this second curve is important in ensuring that the school is confident that the planned pedagogical improvement has had a desirable effect on teaching and learning, and also enables it to deliberately consider and plan the next innovation or series of improvements.

Therefore, the first phase or curve is focused on introducing, implementing, managing and sustaining a pedagogical improvement that has an impact on learners. School 2. was not able to introduce or manage an improvement in teaching and learning due to the problems associated with leadership, the cultural and group norms,

the values, organisation and structure of the school and its lack of readiness.

In contrast, school 1. had successfully managed an improvement in pedagogical practice within the classrooms by developing the internal conditions that facilitated the development and capacity building of the staff. This is the first curve of the change process. However, they did not appear to move into the second phase or curve.

To summarise, the second curve seems to occur when a school is able to build on the individual learning from the first curve in order to facilitate organisational or whole school learning, thus managing the change process itself.

It appeared that the sources of the second curve, a phenomenon that is fuelled by the massive forces of improvement, relied on learning to anticipate these changes. Schools 3. and 4. appeared to be able to put these improvements into context and to understand the pace of change and how the improvements would affect the various aspects of the school's life. The second curve did not seem limited to the school, as individuals were affected too and were forced to face second curve realities.

The main differences between the first two schools and schools 3. and 4. were that the teachers in the latter two schools redefined their values and attitudes. This articulation and redefinition of values became embedded within these two schools. The values appeared to be linked to each other and seemed to affect practice. To the observer, the values of individuals appeared to be linked to their classroom practice, which then affected the values within the subject or age phase department, which then had a further impact on the values of the school. The values appeared to affect different aspects of the life of the school and to be linked or form a chain of values which I called the "value-chain." Whereas, schools 1. and 2. on the other hand, had loosely coupled values that were rarely discussed.

The headteachers of schools 3., 4., X and Y reconfigured the existing conditions and created a new and different set of rules, by focusing the energies of the staff on practically implementing the new learning that capacity building had encouraged. The explosive growth in school 4. came when the teachers saw the worth in the new chain of school values, that was supported by the professional challenge to their assumptions and perspectives by their external adviser, and which led to the building of new models of teaching. Both school 3. and school 4. continually re-evaluated their first curve developments to determine which were succeeding and which were not, but school 4. took this slightly further, by also monitoring and re-evaluating the longer-term overall school affects and their effectiveness in managing the change process.

All of the schools seemed to value and reward current or short-term performance, but schools 3. and 4. also focused on future equity and not just current improvements. Both schools also began to examine their management and organisation of their school, in order to support the short-term pedagogic improvement and the longer-term management of change.

Fundamentally, managing on two curves appears to mean confronting the uncertainty of improvement and becoming comfortable with it. It means being willing and able to pursue the future. Schools 3., 4., X and Y developed a diverse management team across each of their schools, by building the skills, role and responsibilities of subject and age phase leaders, although this was not the goal of their original improvement plan. However, school 4. developed this further, by investing in and paying attention to strategic planning and the creation and tracking of leading indicators supported by the systematic review of the long-term plan. They appeared to think systematically about the future, not in the hope of prediction or of creating elaborate, inflexible

plans, but as an ongoing discipline of strategic management. At the core of this strategic long-term thinking was a focus on discerning the true pace of change and grounding the future innovations in the information arising out of the present improvements. It appeared from the evidence that the second curve is radically different from the first curve as it requires additional competencies from the staff. However, both curves demand effective capacity building.

Capacity Building:

Capacity building can also be divided into two stages. The first stage is connected to building the capacity of the individual and the second stage is connected to building the capacity of the organisation. If the first curve of change – pedagogical improvement - is to happen successfully, then the first stage of capacity building appears to be important. The first part of this is when teachers are able to develop their knowledge, skills, competence and confidence in teaching strategies, methods and approaches that directly improve learning. The second part is where teachers are then supported to test, try-out, experiment and adapt their new learning to meet the needs of the children. Table 5 describes this process.

Table 5: The link between school improvement and capacity building

First curve of improvement and its relation to capacity building: **Building the capacity of the individual**		
School improvement	**Stage 1:**	Build the capacity of individual teachers by enabling them to acquire new knowledge and skills about teaching methods and approaches; Expand and deepen the repertoire of teacher's skills that affect learning.
School improvement	**Stage 2:**	Professional support and enable the teachers to apply, test and adjust their new learning in the classroom
Second curve of improvement and its relation to capacity building: **Building the capacity of the organisation**		
Building the capacity of the organisation	**Stage 1:**	Building the capacity of the school by developing strategic planning, the creation and use of tracking indicators that are focused on the learning process and not just the learning outcomes; Teaching strategies are integrated into the curriculum, - providing a vehicle to share good practice so that learning is not isolated within subjects; Ensure that the organisation and management of the school supports and is focused on learning
Sustaining the improvement within the organisation	**Stage 2:**	School develops its own networks, internally and externally to support continuous change which is focused on school improvement, i.e. learning.

All the schools utilised the skills of an external adviser or trainer to provide the first stage of the individual capacity building. However, schools 3. and 4. recognised the need to continue that relationship to ensure that stage two capacity building could be developed. School 4. also retained its relationship with the external adviser into the organisational capacity building phase. Table 6 attempts to group the categories and types of actions that were observed being taken by the external adviser in school 4.

In terms of school improvement and the sustainability of the improvements, there seems to be a requirement to give attention to both the individual and the

organisational capacity needs. A systematic and integrated approach to staff development that focuses on the professional learning of teachers and establishes the classroom as a training venue is an essential part of school improvement.

Table 6: Actions taken by the external adviser in school 4.

Curve 1: Stage 1 Capacity building – building the individual:	
Actions taken by capacity builder:	**Focus of actions:**
Promote, inform and tell; Demonstrate and show; Train.	Focused on specific small scale teaching practices that will affect learning.
Curve 1: Stage 2 Capacity building – building the individual:	
Actions taken by capacity builder:	**Actions taken by teachers:**
Observing; Providing developmental feedback; Questioning; Eliciting; Advising; Assisting.	Trying out new methods and strategies; Testing and amending after feedback; Challenging their own assumptions; Information seeking; Questioning; Trial and test again; Articulation of values and beliefs; Installation.
Curve 2: Capacity building – building the organisation:	
Actions taken by capacity builder:	**Actions taken by school:**
Questioning; Advising; Assisting; Providing feedback; Servicing; Nurturing.	Developing whole school strategies; Articulation and agreement of the school values chain; Monitoring and evaluation; Considering implications for the curriculum; Enabling demonstration lessons and observation by colleagues with analytical feedback; Re-organising the management of the school; Developing the roles and responsibilities of all managers across the school; Involving parents and pupils.

Summary

The issues raised in this discussion could have the potential to give greater insights into the dynamics of sustainable school improvement in independent schools. As well as the range of strategies for school improvement, it could provide a possible key to sustaining enhanced levels of student progress and achievement for all schools whatever their 'growth state' or stage in their 'performance cycle'.

Raising levels of academic achievement must ultimately be related to the quality of the classroom experience encountered by children throughout the school. Perhaps, in the past, independent schools involved in the improvement and change process have attempted to change school or organisational structures as a starting point, because that appears, at first glance, to be easier than tackling sensitive issues such as values and pedagogy. However, the evidence seems to indicate that the changes in the value-chain were a key factor to improvements in pedagogy. It appears that it is difficult to improve pedagogical practice without developing values and beliefs. Therefore, it may be appropriate for independent schools to consider this element of the process first.

It may also be relevant that some independent schools, despite having a planning document that they call a strategic school development plan, do not think and act strategically. As was seen in the first two schools, a narrowly defined set of objectives or actions may start a school on the improvement process, but it is difficult to sustain the process.

The independent schools in this study that progressed further, began the process in the same way as schools 1. and 2., but were also developing along strategic lines, where they were 'institutionalising' the capacity to improve at individual and organisational

level. This enabled them to sustain the improvements, at both a pedagogical level in the classroom and at an organisational level throughout the school.

Despite the similarities between the schools in this study, each of the schools were coming from a different starting points in their pedagogical improvement process, they each had very different contexts and problems and were perceived differently by both the teachers and parents. They ranged from a school that had been thought to be failing to one that was believed to be very successful. Also, each of the schools moved through the pedagogical improvement/organisational change process at different rates and achieved different levels of success. It is, therefore, important that these case studies do not attempt to purport that one process or model can be identically applied to all schools. Indeed, the research and work by Hopkins (2001) shows that schools should use different strategies according to their stage of development. However, there was evidence that schools 4., X and Y seemed to be able to sustain the improvements.

In this chapter, I have examined and synthesised the findings of the research evidence from the case studies and have structured the discussion in order to address Barth's (1990) assumptions about improvement. The next chapter will attempt to draw together the main points of this study and to return to the research questions.

Understanding the Process and Outcomes of Pedagogical Improvement in Independent Preparatory Schools

Chapter 6: Conclusions

In this chapter, I shall draw together the main points of this study. To do this, I will return to the central findings that arise out of the research and the literature, in order to address the original research questions; consider three key issues that arise from the conclusions; reflect on the research process and suggest future areas for research.

Although I have called the chapter 'conclusions', I should reiterate that the points that I highlight are not firm conclusions but rather findings that warrant further study. It also needs to be acknowledged that there is yet more to explore about the introduction, processes, outcomes and consequences of pedagogical improvement and its relationship to the management of change and school improvement.

As noted earlier, this study was concerned with the processes and outcomes of pedagogical improvement in independent preparatory schools. The central proposition was that pedagogical improvement is a strategy for educational change, as it is focused on improving children's achievement, which is secured by modifying classroom practice and adapting the management arrangements within the school. Therefore, the main purpose of this research was to examine a small group of independent schools before, during and after a planned episode of pedagogical improvement, systematically over time.

Summary of the main findings arising out of the research:

<u>Question 1: Why do preparatory schools feel impelled to move from the perceived relative stability to relative instability of planned pedagogical improvement?</u>

As was shown in chapter four, the exploratory study revealed that the apparent stability that the schools projected was not warranted, and that the schools had

survived by ensuring that they met the changing needs that were driven by external forces and perceptions of parents, governors and the teachers. Historically, the schools had adapted their systems and values, and adopted ideas and approaches whenever it was appropriate and expedient for survival or growth, and the planned pedagogical improvements, that this research investigated, were part of that continuing pattern.

It might be seductive to imagine that these independent schools were isolated from the process of the national state education system. However, the evidence from the exploratory study indicated that the schools were influenced not only by their history and traditions but also by external pressures (parents, inspection, performance measures and government legislation), as well as internal pressures (the emotions, values, perceptions, knowledge, understanding, experience, relationships and capacity of the staff).

There was agreement amongst the governors, headteachers and teachers, that the standards of pupil achievement had to improve in order for these schools to meet the variety of demands that were being placed on them, despite most of the organisations being perceived as 'successful' schools. The drive for pedagogical improvement came from the continued need to improve and to be competitive within their local situation.

From the outset of the study, parents, teachers and governing bodies focused on a desire for general improvement within the schools and, in particular, in standards of pupils' achievements. The common driving motivation for the teachers and headteachers within the schools was to bring about an improvement in the learning and standards of achievement. The exploratory study indicated that this was a development for the schools, as traditionally the headteachers had been aloof from the

practices of the classroom. Previously, changes or improvements in the classroom practices that affected teaching and learning would have been a task that would have been delegated to others, if it had been considered important enough; and, therefore, it was this element or focus that was the new dimension to an on-going process..

Question 2: Do these independent preparatory schools have the capacity to improve themselves?

This question requires the consideration of three issues and these are: what is capacity in terms of this study; did the schools have the capacity to improve; and how do we know this?

Earlier in this study, capacity was defined as a measure of the generative potential of individuals or a school to improve, manage change and sustain development. Capacity at an individual level has to be developed and formalised, before school level capacity can be developed. The concept of capacity (Spillane and Thompson 1997, Leithwood and Jantzi 2000) has linked the idea of individual or organisational learning capacity to the idea of individual or organisational learning (Dibbon 1999). During the last decade, the idea of capacity has increasingly been linked with key ideas within school improvement. These range from Meyers' (1986) general notion of staff readiness, their 'preparedness' to deal with change to the broad image of the school as a learning organisation, as popularised by Senge (1990). The evidence from case studies demonstrated that teachers and schools have a certain capacity or capacities for dealing with change or improvement. Therefore, capacity has been used, in this research, to mean the types of knowledge, skills, attitudes and relationships required of individuals and teams within a school, that underpin its development. This can lead to a school having the ability or potential to improve pupil

outcomes, manage and learn from improvement and change, and sustain their own development.

When considering the second sub-question, the evidence indicates that the majority of the schools did have the capacity to improve themselves. However, in order to accomplish this, they required external support. In five of the schools, the role of the external adviser was to support teachers to practise, trial, test and attempt (in safety) to implement their new knowledge and skills in the classroom. The teachers were placed in the position of effective learners by the external advisers. This was seen by the headteachers and teachers as an essential strategy. The development of teachers' knowledge and understanding of the learning process, changes in teaching methodology and improving teachers' knowledge of the structure of the curriculum were key elements to improving the quality of teaching and learning.

The teachers believed that the individual capacity building activities had encouraged and established a supportive climate both affectively and cognitively within the subject and age phase departments. The evidence shows that trust was developed by the affirmation of individual teachers' views and understanding which led to collective reflection and open discussion on the different perspectives represented within the departments.

To summarise, the evidence showed that the development of teachers' understanding alongside their ability to use a wider range of teaching methods which had had an impact on the pupils, and the development of agreed values through the individual capacity building activities led to deeper levels of improvements in the classrooms.

In considering how we know that the schools had the capacity to improve themselves,

it is important to summarise the events and outcomes in the schools:

School 1

The headteacher and teachers of school 1. believed that they had successfully accomplished what they set out to do. They also felt that they had learned a great deal from the process itself and that they would apply and use this process during the next set of improvements that they would wish to make in the future. To the observer, it appeared that although the capacity of individual teachers had been developed, and that school and classroom practices had been strengthened, the school had missed an opportunity to build on these initial improvements. It appeared from the evidence that when undertaking future developments, they would repeat the experience rather than build on it. Despite this, the headteacher and teachers in this school were pleased and satisfied with what they had achieved and felt positive about themselves and the future.

School 2

The two headteachers (the original headteacher and the subsequent headteacher) and teachers of school 2. had been demoralised, discouraged and disheartened by the effects of the improvement process, the way that it was managed, and by the outcomes and the consequences. There was clarity of purpose but no shared ownership of that purpose or the intentions of change. There was no shared control over the implementation process and an inappropriate mix of pressure with little support. Evident difficulties were not addressed and as a consequence there appeared to little will, skill or enthusiasm to correct this. This led to a rapid decline in relationships between the teachers and the headteacher, which in turn led to the development of alliances between the teachers, the senior master and the governors. These anti-change and anti-risk alliances led to the disintegration of the planned

improvement episode and the headteacher's position. The school was not able to proceed, as it did not have the basic organisational and cultural foundations in place, in order to build the competence and confidence of the teachers to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

School 3

School 3. successfully managed the first phase or curve of improvement and built on this experience by moving into the second curve. The headteacher and teachers believe that they have made the improvements that they had planned but that whilst in the process of accomplishing this, they had, unknowingly at the time, moved into the first elements of pedagogical and institutional improvement. On reflection, they confidently assume that they are able to build on this process and develop effective strategies for the future.

Schools 4., X. and Y.

The headteachers and teachers of schools 4., X and Y are certain that they are in the second curve of the improvement process. They are convinced that they have improved the teaching methods that teachers use through the capacity building programme, and that these classroom improvements have been supported by strategic whole school developments of roles, responsibilities, planning, structures and the curriculum and the organisation of the school; which have led to pedagogical improvement. They also believe that they are now beginning to learn how to manage the change process. The headteachers' judgement is that they now find their jobs slightly easier to fulfil and believe that they and their teachers probably work more effectively, and are focused and concentrated on pedagogy compared to the past.

The evidence indicates that with the exception of school 2., these independent preparatory schools do have the capacity to improve themselves. The rapidly improving schools believe that they created the right conditions for augmenting teaching which led to pedagogical improvement by identifying and recognising that improving children's learning and learning outcomes had to be at the centre of whatever strategies they would implement; by collectively agreeing the objectives that were focused on improving teaching and learning; and importantly, linking the professional development of the staff, to these objectives.

Five of the schools believe that there has been an improvement in classroom practice and teaching methods, which are described in the case studies.

However, schools 3.,4., X and Y believe that the improvements have been of a fundamental nature, because they have influenced teachers' values and beliefs and therefore have had a great effect on their practice. These four schools are also able to catalogue regular cross phase and subject teaching between teachers, where they observe, demonstrate and support each other in order to develop teaching methods and instructional practice.

School 2., which made none of these improvements, has now stabilised and is in the position of beginning to identify, discuss and agree the areas for improvement in teaching. It would be interesting to observe its development over time.

There was emerging evidence of improvement in teacher morale, cohesiveness and general job satisfaction, in five of the schools. This appeared to be at a deeper level in four of the schools, where there was evidence that the teachers' feelings about their

work was predominately affected by contextual factors on two levels. The first was their own capacity to successfully manage, internalise and develop their repertoire of teaching methods which achieved recognisable and successful objectives that impacted on learning, in the context of the age group or subject(s) that they worked with.

The second level comprised the successful relationships of the match between improvements in the classroom to the developments within the whole school context. This needed to be a coherent process that was focused on modifying the values and structure of the organisation to support school improvement, by building the capacity of all teachers within the school at those two levels.

Finally, as this investigation has focused on pedagogical improvement, it is important to examine whether there was a positive impact on teaching, learning and pupil achievement. As has already been argued in chapter one (the introduction) and chapter two (the review of literature) pedagogy is much wider and deeper than teaching, as it contains all the elements of teaching, such as tasks, activities, interaction and judgements plus pupil, resource and time organisation; however, pedagogy also contains the contingent discourses about the character of culture, the purpose of education, the nature of childhood and learning and the structure of knowledge. Teaching is an act and pedagogy is both an act and a discourse as it "encompasses the performance of teaching together with the theories, beliefs, policies and controversies that inform and shape it" (Alexander 2001). These pedagogical discourses bear on and are manifested in the various aspects of teaching and it is what goes on in all areas of the life of a school.

The investigation identified and collected a considerable amount of pupil

performance data which indicated an improvement in the standards of pupil achievement and progress. However, it was difficult to ascertain whether this improvement was the outcome of the improvement process or for other reasons. Therefore, in order to ascertain whether there had been an impact on classrooms, it was felt important to examine developments or improvements in teaching methodology and pedagogy. In order to do this, I wish to draw on two examples:

Example 1

The teaching of science in school 4. was believed by the school, based on their own evidence, to have been fundamentally improved due to their own professional development and the capacity building process, which increased their knowledge and understanding of how children learn. They decided that, as interventionists, they would not instruct a class group directly, preferring to elicit the children's own ideas then challenge these with alternatives. The ensuing 'cognitive conflict' pushed the children into attending harder to the scientific problems they faced, and, in that way, to learn. At the outset the teachers enabled the children to become familiar, through discussion, with the important characteristics of scientific problem-solving, including the specialised language they would need to make sense of it. Also, during the teaching they used a question-answer technique to lead the children towards a 'mindful' overview of the principles underlying what they had achieved. The golden rule of this constructivist approach was to maintain learners' sense of their own progress, and thus their conviction that they are in charge of events. For this reason, learners' individual solutions to problems were utilised as stepping stones to final solutions; in no event were 'correct' solutions preferred in advance of learners' own problem-solving. Added to the psychological justifications for this strategy, its scientific merit was to make sure that the children grasped the logical bond between

problems and solutions (that is, they would know why a problem-solution worked). The teachers' meticulous attention to a child's control of their own problem-solving is what shines through their teaching methodology. It was not just that they learned science through their school syllabus, they could also be shown to have acquired the 'higher-order' thinking skills which advanced academic study requires and which Vygotsky pointed out (1978) do not develop naturally.

Example 2

In school Y. the teachers of the six to nine year olds re-examined how they taught mathematics and numeracy, as an outcome of the capacity building workshops and classroom coaching by the external adviser. Six rules of procedure were followed: First, children's own mathematical notions nurtured out of school were talked about in the classroom. Secondly, the children were not required to abandon these ideas, but were taught to trust and value them. Thirdly, they were instructed in formal notation by linking this notation to pupils' familiar, though intuitive understandings. Fourthly, core mathematical ideas were introduced rapidly, so that they could be applied to situations. Fifthly, children were taught how to apply their new knowledge in everyday problem-solving. Finally, as part of this teaching, pupils were engaged in proper, mathematical discussion; that is, they did not simply work on written tasks. The school claims to have achieved dramatic success, finding their methods are "effective for children of all ability levels".

There are differences between these projects, but their stronger similarities derive from their both being grounded in comprehensible pedagogical and cognitive theory. What in both cognitive development and school learning seems to matter is a matching of new knowledge to existing cognitive structure such that learners can integrate the former into the latter. Learners' present knowledge is elicited to be

shown as valuable and worthy of use, so that when new knowledge is introduced it is seen by learners as a means of making sense of what have become living issues. The new knowledge is not introduced as sets of ideas disembedded from the experiences they illuminate – which is a danger teachers can ignore when pressed for time. Importantly, for these teachers, they were applying the methods and learning that they had experienced and acquired during the capacity building workshops and the coaching sessions with the external advisers. The two examples provide some limited evidence from observation, of learning by the teachers at a personal and professional level of comprehension. Teachers can hardly commit themselves to new teaching approaches if there is no relevance to them. It seems that in both of these cases, the external adviser had been able to scaffold and focus teacher discussion, knowledge and understanding onto learner-specific conditions. This fashioning of the direction of the teachers' professional development was both intrinsic (in terms of the development of special forms of skill) and extrinsic (providing precise goals to achieve). This seemed to be crucial. Studies of technical rationality and reflective practice show that teaching is directed within two interlocking contexts, that of public accountability and that owed to practitioners' available skills. How teachers manage their curricula, teaching methods and organisation of learning will be dictated by their awareness of their own skills within the bureaucratic context set by the school, but it will be most obedient to their professional beliefs – about themselves as people and as professionals, and about the nature of pupil learning and intellectual development. Issues connected with the best accounts of what happens when human beings learn, in ways thought likely to profit them over the long term, are at the heart of pedagogy.

Question 3: If these independent schools did have the capacity to improve themselves, what are the conditions and processes which enable them to promote and sustain pedagogical improvement?

I shall answer this question in two parts. Firstly, I wish to examine the conditions and processes that promoted improvement; and secondly, to consider how the improvements were sustained in some of the schools.

The development of common beliefs, a commitment to shared goals and developing clarity in understanding the goals that were being implemented, were seen by teachers as essential components of ensuring effective implementation of the improvement process.

The headteachers believed that there was an additional essential element in the improvement process and this was the use of pupil performance and progress data to highlight and justify the imperative of enhancing teaching and learning. The consideration of *why* the planned pedagogical improvement was going to take place was crucially more important than the initial discussions of *how* it was going to be implemented. The evidence showed that in the schools where there was agreement about why the teaching and learning needed to be amended and augmented, this was supported by the outcomes of pupil performance data, and was focused on improving children's achievement; it aligned teachers' energies and participation in the process and lessened the resistance to the improvement plan and possible changes to the teaching processes in classrooms.

Where some of the schools had been successful and had undertaken rapid improvement, the core action that enabled improvement to take place was the recognition that the planning, introduction and management processes for developing teaching through the capacity building programme had been very important. Not only

were the teachers in receipt of high quality diffuse professional development, but the schools had also ensured that the teachers were involved in the discussion, decision-making and planning processes for the targeted improvement. The schools believe that they created the right conditions for augmenting teaching which led to pedagogical improvement by identifying and recognising that improving children's learning and learning outcomes had to be at the centre of whatever strategies they would implement; by collectively agreeing the objectives that were focused on improving teaching and learning; and importantly, linking the professional development of staff to these objectives.

Immediately after the planned improvement process, the schools thought that there had been no effect on the curriculum. However, during the course of the case studies, it appeared that the teachers of schools 3. and 4. believed that they had made substantial changes to the curriculum. They began to recognise that if they were encouraging children to access information in a range of ways, discuss and work together collaboratively and to think for themselves, then this had implications for not only the subject content but also for how this was arranged and expected to be taught. As a consequence, four of the schools have adapted and changed the curriculum in all subjects. This was the first move into pedagogical improvement as the teachers were beginning to think of the implications for teaching beyond the act of teaching. Although this was an unintended outcome, it was a pivotal development.

A further consequence was that none of the schools had considered the impact of what they were doing, in terms of the effect on the use of time and time tabling. Four of the schools have found that they have needed to make major changes to the way that they organised blocks of time for subject work and for the length of lessons.

They decided that if it was important to offer children opportunities to investigate, question and work collaboratively, the forty or forty five-minute lesson was not appropriate. It has not been easy for any of the schools to make these changes and each of them is still experimenting to discover the most appropriate compromise between the demands of different and competing subjects and school organisational priorities. However, the recognition that the organisation of the school, curriculum and teaching and learning are not isolated from the act of teaching was a further move towards improving pedagogy and managing the improvement process itself.

All the schools have now made changes to the way in which they induct new teachers into the school and provide support during the first year, to enable new teachers (whether experienced or inexperienced) to quickly become part of the pedagogical team.

The appraisal systems have been strengthened in four of the schools and individual teacher professional development (personal capacity building) is now balanced alongside the demands and priorities of the strategic development plan (school capacity building). However, within these four schools, the focus of improving pedagogy is the driving force at both personal and school level professional development programmes and plans.

Four of the schools have introduced programmes of professional development for the subject/age phase leaders in terms of their role and responsibilities for the quality of teaching and learning. Each of these post holders is provided with release time during the school day in a systematic and planned way, so that they are able to observe classroom practice, work alongside colleagues and support the improvement in standards of teaching with the objective of improving standards of pupil

achievement.

When considering how the schools sustained these improvements it seems important to reflect on the whole process that occurred over the five years. Whilst observing these schools over this period of time, it appeared that there were two main sequences happening within some of the schools during the stages of the improvement process. The first sequence was concerned with maintaining the traditional values and management of the school and classrooms, whilst preparing for and then implementing the improvement episode successfully. The second sequence appears to arise from the individual and collective learning about the management of improvement that actually occurs during the process of transformation. This was often achieved by the headteachers developing and devolving shared leadership with their subject and age phase co-ordinators, and by ensuring that the structural arrangements within the school allowed for and sustained the recent developments in the classroom. This in turn led to the establishment of cultural norms within the school as a whole that challenged isolationism in classrooms and fragmentation within subject or age phase departments and resulted in the further re-organising and strengthening of the school wide processes which helped to equalise power and responsibilities within the school. It was during this phase of the improvement process that there was evidence of a changing culture within some of the schools, and that this changing culture enabled teachers to work together effectively. This issue of sustainability will be considered further and in detail in the fourth question.

<u>Question 4: Is it possible to develop a model to illustrate how the improvement process was sustained in some of the schools?</u>

One of the objectives of the research was to investigate whether there were common experiences or stages within the improvement process, despite the different contexts

and needs of the schools. The literature indicates that schools that use capacity building are operating at a high level of effectiveness and build on this by employing sophisticated approaches to improvement; and that these schools collectively understand the cause of positive change and the areas of resistance in the school. The evidence from this research refutes this suggestion, as although the case study schools had experienced and understood resistance to change and wished to promote improvement, the evidence shows that they were not working at high levels of effectiveness and did not have the knowledge, skills, or understanding of how to sustain improvement in the short term, let alone the medium and long term.

Faced with similar demands of improving pupil achievement, the schools responded in individual ways. However, the evidence showed that there was some form of developmental sequence that the schools went through in order to become more effective over the time of this investigation.

When considering how some of the schools sustained the improvements and developed this process further, it is important to understand their objectives. Schools 4., X and Y. came to believe that they needed to build on their initial improvements to ensure that their performance across the whole school was consistent. They believed that "on-off initiatives" were not effective in the long term and that future improvements had to be rooted in a philosophy that could sustain continuous improvement. Consistency in good teaching had to be supported by consistency and effectiveness in whole school organisation, structures and management. None of the schools deliberately or knowingly initially planned to achieve these objectives, as they appeared to grow out of the initial stage of the improvement process. However, in order to analyse this process at a deeper level, it is

necessary to analytically describe the experience of these three schools.

To the external observer, the phases or sequences in the improvement process were not simple or uniform, but almost like waves or moving lines, such as undulating curves. These curves appeared to be formed by the gradual and growing confidence and understanding of the paradox of being able to live with conflicting goals and becoming comfortable with new rules and methods. At times, the curve advanced and at other times, aspects of the curve receded. The definition of the word curve, is, according to the Collins dictionary, "a line representing variations in force and quantity of a process". It therefore, appeared that the stages of the improvement process could be part of a larger changing sequence of activities. I have chosen to use the term curve in order to describe the two main sequences of the improvement process.

The first curve of improvement was concerned with creating the conditions for change and developing strategies for supporting and enabling the effective improvement in teachers' knowledge, understanding and confidence and simultaneously enabling them to implement these strategies in classrooms. In order to achieve the improvements, the schools developed the capacity of individual teachers.

There was a recognition, by the headteachers, that the teachers' capacity (meaning knowledge, understanding and skills) had to be developed and the evidence showed that the teachers in these three schools (4., X and Y) underwent a learning process during the first curve. This learning process had been modelled by the external advisers during the capacity building stage and illustrated good teacher-learner strategies and methods.

Developing the capacity of teachers assumed a whole school dimension, through a

systematic and integrated approach to staff development, that focused on the professional learning of teachers and established the classroom as an important centre for teacher development. Staff development was the central strategy for supporting teachers as they engaged in improvement activities. A common factor, in the rapidly improving schools, was the use of diffuse professional development that was based on developing the capacity of individuals, and which made the connection between improving teacher knowledge and skills to teacher practice and learner behaviour in the classrooms.

A second phenomenon was happening during this first curve and that was related to the teachers' values. If classroom practice is to be affected, then teachers' beliefs and understanding as well as their behaviour and practices need to be addressed. Fullan (1991) states that "real change, whether desired or not, represents a serious personal and collective experience characterised by ambivalence and uncertainty for the individual involved." During the first curve, whilst teachers were undergoing individual capacity building activities within their own classrooms, supported by the external advisers, there was a focus, a redefinition through discussion and debate of what the teachers believed to be important in terms of teaching and pedagogy. The external advisers focused on supporting teachers as they adapted their beliefs, which informed their practice in the classroom, and so lessened the levels of anxiety and feelings of incompetence that have been noted in other research studies (Huber and Miles, 1984 and Fullan, 1991), when schools have been undertaking improvement. As the teachers became more confident and skilled in the implementation and use of new or different teaching methods and forms of organisation, it seems that the teachers were adapting their ways of thinking and beliefs. This enabled teachers to become confident about their own capacity, in the capacity of their colleagues and in

the capacity of the school. They experienced success and this had an impact on the 'value-chain', which eventually led to institutionalisation. The improvement ceased being regarded as something new, as it had become part of the teachers' and therefore, the school's way of doing things.

Case study four (chapter four) indicated that the fact that teaching and learning were the focus for improvement was an essential factor in ensuring successful school improvement. The ability to target improvements in pupils' learning whilst building the capacity of teachers to enhance and sustain that pupil learning was essential if institutional pedagogical improvement was to be realised . As the evidence demonstrated, in those schools where there was a development of common beliefs, a commitment to shared goals and a clarity in teachers' understanding about the processes for achieving those objectives and goals, the teachers became increasingly involved and committed to the improvement process – it became "their process".

The development of teachers' understanding, alongside their ability to use a wider range of teaching methods which had had an impact on the pupils, and the development of agreed values through the individual capacity building activities led to the second curve.

This second curve was associated with strategically building on the first curve in order to develop the capacity of the school. This was achieved by the headteachers developing and devolving shared leadership with their subject and age phase co-ordinators and by ensuring that the structural arrangements within the school allowed for and sustained the recent developments in classrooms. This in turn led to the establishment of cultural norms within the school as a whole, that challenged isolationism in classrooms and fragmentation within subject or age phase

departments, and resulted in the further re-organising and strengthening of the school-wide processes which helped to equalise power and responsibilities within the school. The second curve changed the culture of the school, by enabling teachers to work together effectively rather than be frustrated by the school's organisation.

It seemed to be important that this was an integrated approach, so that the school's capacity for development and improvement can grow out of "authentic" (Hopkins 2001) classroom improvement that is focused specifically on improving and sustaining the quality of the learning process and the learners' outcomes.

The next two tables explain, graphically, the stages that the majority of the case study schools commonly experienced during the improvement process. Table 7 explains the two stages in the first curve.

Table 7: The first curve of the school improvement process (improving individuals and teaching methods)

First curve of improvement and its relation to capacity building: Building the capacity of individual teachers		
Improving teaching methods used by individual teachers	Stage 1:	• Developing the conditions in the school to focus on improving teaching and learning; • Build the capacity of individual teachers by enabling them to acquire new knowledge and skills about teaching methods, classroom strategies and the learning process.
Improving teaching methods used by individual teachers and then groups of teachers	Stage 2;	• Professional support enables teachers to apply, test and adjust their new learning to their normal classroom context and conditions;. • Deliberately, causing teachers to discuss and agree their underlying values in teaching and learning; • Agreeing the school values for teaching and learning.

The research showed that this was followed, almost simultaneously, by an interim period, when teachers were encouraged to think about, reflect on and agree the values that they believed underpinned the important work that they do in the classroom. The findings demonstrated that stage two within curve one, was characterised by

discussions between individual teachers and the external adviser and amongst the members of different departments about the new forms of teaching methods or classroom organisation that they had been developing during stage one. These discussions enhanced and deepened the growing confidence that teachers had about their individual capacity in their own domain of responsibility. Case studies three, four and five in chapter four, provided evidence that the act of observing others, working alongside colleagues, discussing each other's work and learning from others, was shown to embed improvements in teaching in the classroom practice and led to discussion on values that underpin teaching. The first curve of improvement is focused on building the capacity of individual's teaching skills in a way that is practical, relevant and realistic.

The second curve of improvement occurs when a school is able to build on the individual learning from the first curve, in order to facilitate the organisational or whole school learning, which can lead to effective management of the improvement process itself. Table 8 explains the second curve of school improvement as a strategy for managing change.

Table 8: The second curve of the school improvement process (organisational and pedagogical improvement)

Second curve of improvement and its relation to capacity building: Building the capacity of the organisation.		
Pedagogical improvement	Stage 1:	• Building the capacity of the school by developing strategic planning, the creation and use of tracking indicators of pupil progress that are focused on the learning process and not just learning outcomes; • Developing teaching strategies that are integrated into the curriculum and enable teachers to compare and discuss their teaching across subjects and age groups; • Developing the curriculum and whole school application of teaching methods that will underpin and strengthen the key values; • Re-organising and improving the way that the school is structured and organised, by focusing on roles and responsibilities; • Developing the role and responsibilities of subject and age phase leaders; • Using pupil performance data to highlight the continuing improvement needs of learners.
School improvement that can lead to effective management of the change process	Stage 2:	School develops strategic approaches to: • Whole school, departmental, curriculum and planning for teaching; • Quality assurance processes and systems that were relevant to teachers and departments; • Building connections and networks (internally and externally), to support continuous change which is focused on pedagogical/school improvement.

Table 9 attempts to describe these stages.

Table 9: the stages of the improvement process

The first curve of improvement: Managing individual and methodological improvement in teaching.	• Creating the internal conditions for successful improvement; • Agreeing the focus of improvement for teaching and learning; • Building the capacity of individual teachers through a programme of professional development; • Enabling teachers to practise and trial their new knowledge and skills in classrooms with support; • Negotiation of how these changes are to be implemented across the whole school; • Enabling teachers to observe each other's practise and to learn from each other; • A discussion of values that will underpin future improvements; • Providing feedback to teachers on the progress towards improving pupil learning outcomes; • An examination of how pupil learning processes have improved.
The second curve of improvement: Managing pedagogical and institutional improvement.	• Teachers adjust pedagogic practices and know that they are doing this deliberately; • Teachers receive feedback from subject/age phase leaders; • Subject and age phase leaders receive training and support in their roles and responsibilities; • School begins to build organisational capacity by undertaking strategic planning; • Set up effective quality assurance processes that are related to real improvement actions in classrooms and departments; • Evidence from quality assurance processes and pupil progress data is used to support the strategic approach; • School develops a network of internal and external support systems.

As the literature has shown, the improvement process unfolds over time and is not linear. Each of the schools shared a common objective of improving the standards of children's achievement by improving learning and undertook similar strategies and approaches of fulfilling this objective by developing and building the capacity of teachers. If we disregard school 2., and examine the processes in the other five schools, we see that the schools placed an emphasis on the initiation and implementation phases. The differences began to arise and were demonstrated during

the early stages of the implementation process; however, the major differences occurred when the schools moved into sustaining improvements and the institutionalisation of the changes. The institutionalisation phase is when the innovation and improvement stop being regarded as something new and become part of the school's usual way of doing things. This stage is crucial in ensuring the sustainability of the improvement process.

It had been assumed by the schools that if the improvement plan had been successfully implemented and the objectives of the innovation had been achieved, then the practices would be embedded and institutionalised. Yet, the evidence from the research indicated that although this is what school 1. had experienced, the improvement process was not embedded or institutionalised. They believed that the next time they wanted to improve, they would restart the process. However, schools 4., X and Y had institutionalised the process by moving into the second curve of the improvement process. Without this advanced phase of development, the improvement becomes an isolated event in the life of the school.

> In the chronicle of research on dissemination and use of educational practises. ..... It turns out that these investments are lost without deliberate attention to the institutional steps that lock an innovation into the local setting. New practices that get built into the training, regulatory, staffing and budgetary cycle survive; others don't. Innovations are highly perishable goods. Taking institutionalisation for granted – assuming somewhat magically that it will happen by itself, or will necessarily result from a technically mastered, demonstrably effective project – is naïve and usually self-defeating.
>
> (Miles, 1983:22)

Schools 4., X and Y embedded the process and adapted their structure, organisation and resources. As Miles (1986) says, "there is a focus on the elimination of competing or contradictory practices, and strong and purposeful links to other change efforts, to the curriculum and classroom teaching". The schools that achieved this, whether they were originally perceived to be successful or as less effective at the beginning at the case study, were those that moved into the second curve, and were able to sustain

and institutionalise the improvement process that was focused on pedagogical development.

Question 5: Was the fact that these schools were independent relevant, and if so, in what way?

As has already been discussed in the exploratory study these schools were operating in a competitive market place and needed to be "seen" as successful. There was collective pressure from the parents and governors for the schools to improve. These schools had many advantages which included an advantageous and stable staffing level, a high level of resourcing, consistency across most subject departments, stability of academic results over at least three years and, with the exception of school X. they were perceived to be successful schools. They also had an orderly school climate, where children's academic outcomes were perceived as the highest priority at class, subject and school level.

However, these schools also had to overcome barriers to change that were deeply embedded in the culture of the school and the psyche of the teachers who worked in them. It seemed that aspects of the traditions, history and culture of these schools presented a facade which concealed long-held beliefs and prejudices, which teachers used to rationalise their school's weaknesses. In some of the schools, the teachers projected their own deficiencies onto the improvement process. They held on to past practices, claiming that this was the way things had always been done, and formed themselves into defensive sub-groups between which hostile relationships had developed. In this atmosphere, it became difficult for the staff to move beyond a preoccupation with the personal problems of the improvement process to a more open discussion about the educational problems facing the school. This idiosyncratic and teacher-focused culture, which concealed itself behind the veil of stability and

tradition, proved to be an important barrier to break through.

On reflection, the fact that many of the pupils came from similar socio-economic groups, where the parents had similar expectations of the school, provided some of the teachers with a reason for resisting change, as they were able to cite parental concern with any unwelcome event. The constant need to maintain pupil numbers is a heavy burden for many of the schools and so encourages a cautious attitude to development or change.

A further anomaly is that the nature pupils themselves did not encourage development or change. Although all the schools in the study were non-selective, many of the pupils were competent or high achieving learners and only a small minority would have been identified as "hard to teach" pupils. The majority of the pupils were supported by their parents, who worked in close partnership with the schools. Many of the pupils were from similar socio-economic status groups and were not adversely affected by poverty or social deprivation. These advantages actually appeared to enable a minority of teachers to conceal ineffectiveness and deficiencies.

An essential component to successful improvement was the teachers' commitment and enthusiasm to suggested plans for improvement. The teachers appeared to have influence and power over the management of the school, due to the complex and intricate pattern of relationships within the schools. This may have been caused by the isolated nature of these schools, who are not supported by a local education authority. Therefore, teachers needed to feel confident that the effort demanded in the improvement projects would result in a pay-off for them, the pupils and the school as a whole. As Rosenholtz (1989) pointed out, the business of mobilising teacher change may be more difficult in some cultures than others and she made a distinction between

'stuck' schools and 'moving' schools. It would seem from this research that improvement projects which ignore the perceptions, opinions and potential gains for teachers are likely to risk early failure. The three main factors necessary for successful improvement, which can survive context and circumstances, were that the improvements were not being introduced quickly but were taking place over medium to long term time scales; a staff consensus that there was a problem which needed solving; and an ability to prioritise. Whilst all three may appear to be self evident, they had all, at times, challenged each of the six school leaders.

Although these independent schools were indirectly affected by national government initiatives, they were not under the same time related demand to initiate improvements or developments within the curriculum or standards of teaching and learning, compared with maintained schools. This enabled the schools to select their own priorities for improvement (rather than mandated objectives) and to undertake the improvement process within their own time frame. With the exception of school 2., all of the schools undertook the improvement process over what would be perceived by maintained schools as a long period of time.

The fact that all of the staff within the schools, at the beginning of the research, referred to their isolation from other schools in general and similar schools in particular, was a problem that had to be overcome. It is not easy for staff from independent schools to attend local education authority professional development opportunities within their locality, unless at great expense. These schools did not have a tradition of planned and effective staff development programmes and many of the teachers had not received development training or support, despite a range of opportunities being provided by the IAPS. Therefore, the isolation that these (and

many other independent) schools suffered from occurred on three levels. At school level, as there was little communication or liaison with other independent schools (other than sporting fixtures) as these were local competitors; at classroom level, as each teacher was seen as being responsible for their own domain; and at an individual professional level where there was little recognition of the importance of maintaining and developing professional capacity.

This may be one reason why the capacity building workshops and classroom coaching, led by the external advisers, was so powerful and effective. The introduction of continuous teacher learning and improvement (that became characterised by collaboration, opportunism, adaptable partnerships and alliances) was an unique and novel experience for the teachers within these schools.

As a result of the improvement process, the schools were mainly able to overcome each level of isolation. An additional and unexpected outcome was that all of the schools became stronger members of the IAPS, in that they utilised the services and professional development opportunities more.

Although these independent schools appear to have shared common features with many maintained schools that embark upon an episode of improvement, the factors which made these schools unique was that although they were influenced by external pressures, they were able to prioritise their own objectives for improvement without having changes decided for them by an external body; to operate within their own time frame without undue pressure from external sources; and to utilise the established, successful and historical precedence of evolving and developing whilst maintaining and presenting a veneer of stability and effectiveness to the outside world. Therefore, the fact that they were independent schools was an important factor.

Further issues arising from the conclusions:

The previous sections are a summarised commentary delineating the critical features of the improvement process and an attempt to answer the research questions. They provided an account of the experiences and actions of the schools involved in a fast moving world of improvement and uncertainty. However, there are three issues from these conclusions that appear to demand further reflection and these are related to the stages of the improvement process within the two curves of improvement, the sequence of the general processes of improvement and the crucial nature of pedagogy within the school improvement process.

<u>The stages of the improvement process</u>

As noted in the previous chapter, the evidence did not suggest that school improvement is a linear process and as Hopkins (2001) has said, "strategies for school development need to fit the growth stage or culture of the particular school". The objective of the research was to add to and refine existing knowledge on the improvement process and the factors influencing it. The schools involved, owned and led the process that was context specific and focused on capacity for improvement.

Hopkins and Harris (1997) speculated about context specific improvement and Reynolds, Teddlie, Hopkins and Stringfield (2000) talked of the "third wave thinking in the school improvement research arena that was context specific" and this has implications when considering the process of improvement that has been the focus of the case studies. Therefore, in this final part of the conclusions, although the schools were at different stages and did not have specific uniform outcomes, there were a number of strategies and processes that it is appropriate to summarise as a theoretical model. Table 10 is an empirical model which attempts to relate the experiences and

practical processes observed. This theoretical model describes an ideal. It has value in that it illustrates that the process is dynamic and a series of actions that can ensure the improvements are sustained.

Table 10: Empirical model of the two curves within the improvement process
The line joining the four stages within the two curves is a 'simple line curve' representing the ideal path of the process

CURVE 1		**CURVE 2**	
Stage 1	**Stage 2**	**Stage 3**	**Stage 4**
Managing the improvement of teaching at an individual and personal level		**Managing pedagogical and school improvement**	
Capacity building of individual teachers Creating the conditions to focus on improving teaching and learning	Cross subject/school developments Discussion and agreement on values Teachers test and apply new knowledge and skills in the classroom	Planning strategically Developing the value chain Developing the roles, responsibilities and organisation of the school Capacity building of the school as an organisation	Sustaining the process Developing structures and school processes that are focused on pedagogical improvement

If leaders are aware of the curves within the process, they may be able to engage in school improvement as a process and not a set of development planning actions.

Assumptions on school improvement

The second area that I wish to reflect on, is related to some of the assumptions in the literature on the improvement process and the findings of this study.

The outcomes of this study and the work of others have shown that successful school improvements projects need to provide teachers with the opportunity to enquire into their own practice in the classroom and this may result in changed attitudes, beliefs and behaviours. As Harris (2002) noted, "The most effective school improvement programmes assist schools to 'build the capacity' for implementing change and improvement". The literature (Hopkins, 2001; Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000; Gray et al. 1999) talks about ensuring that there is a focus on learning, in order to develop learning and teaching. This approach frequently focuses on developing the whole school conditions in order to improve the school generally. However, the evidence from this study indicates that if the strategies are focused on teachers and classrooms, the improvement process is deepened and accelerated.

There has also been an assumption that for school improvement to be effective, that the teachers need to be collegial or to have collegiate working relationships and to work closely together as a team. However, the experiences of these schools showed that the micro-politics, history and culture of the schools would not support that principle in practice. The schools found collegial team work difficult due to the danger from the micro-political forces and the spread of stakeholder constituencies in these highly centralised and directed organisations. The introduction of the improvement process was characterised by rivalry and conflict, rather than by teachers working their way through philosophical and values-based issues about the curriculum and learning. It was not only difficult for the six headteachers, but also

for the teachers who had become the translators and mediators of the policies and culture that had existed in the school previously. They perceived that they had to meet the challenge to their identities and previous working practices. They also did not relish having to take on and exercise management functions that they believed opposed teaching rather than supported or developed it. However, all the teachers knew that they had to comply and as a consequence some of the teachers demonstrated willing compliance. These teachers had an internalised commitment to the school and therefore, complied with the changes that were being asked of them by the headteachers.

There was also unwilling compliance, with displays of anger, frustration and bitterness from the teachers, about how they believed they had been treated and how they as individuals had experienced change in their status and role.

The third group across the four schools used strategic compliance, where they pragmatically responded to the tensions between professional habitus and managerial demands. The strategic compliers were the largest group identified and their struggle within and through practice was based on strong historical and cultural legacies combined with a shrewd understanding of the realities of the new context of their work. Even though they were excluded from knowing the rationale for decisions at the beginning, they found that after a period they were able to manoeuvre and form a relationship with the headteacher, rather than be allied with the unwilling compliers. This isolated the unwilling compliers and enabled the headteachers to change their leadership and management styles.

It appears that this micro political approach was essential in enabling practitioners who live and work in historically informed cultures to filter or have an impact on

what was happening within the school. Over time, as they have become more involved and part of the planning and decision making process, these strategic compliers have supported the headteachers in overcoming the unwilling compliers. As a consequence, the teachers within five of the schools have reached a settlement with their headteacher, and the schools are now stable.

What the schools in this study have demonstrated is that it is possible for teachers to develop their knowledge and understanding that can influence and improve practice; and that teachers can change their beliefs and attitudes that also influences practice. Although these teachers were not working collegially, they were collaborating to achieve shared goals, and had highly developed expectations of the children by experiencing the two curves of the process. These changes appear to have been made because the capacity building processes moved from methodology to pedagogy, which developed professional cohesion. Consequently, to expect teachers to change their beliefs or practice simply because of school needs is ignoring the meanings which individuals invest in their day-to day actions. Therefore, it may be more appropriate and attainable for schools to focus on encouraging participation, collaboration and cohesion rather than collegiality or team work that cannot be sustained.

The further consideration and analysis of the data encourages me to believe that there is something to be gained from reflecting on the schools, in this study, that were not considered to be effective at the beginning of the improvement process, as they managed the order and sequence of their actions differently from what is suggested in the school improvement literature. The behaviour that they demonstrated was:

- A rigorous focus on learning;

- Initiated the first phase of school improvement by developing teaching through the building of the capacity of individuals and developing practice in classrooms;

- Identified, discussed and agreed values that affect learning in classrooms, they began to address the tensions that existed between teachers who had different values and expectations;

- Initiated the second phase of school improvement by developing the structure and organisation of the institution;

- Identified, discussed and agreed values that affect learning in the school, they began to address notions and assumptions about the purposes and nature of teaching and learning

- Developments in the curriculum and the pedagogic consistency.

The re-ordering of the process seemed to be important for enabling the school to consolidate the learning processes that had been encountered in the classroom. It starts as a "bottom-up" process; however, this bottom-up process has to be initiated, managed and supported by the leaders, or it is doomed to failure. The second stage of replicating the classroom improvement successes on a school-wide basis also needs to be seen as both "bottom-up and top-down", in order for it to be effective.

<u>Pedagogy and teaching.</u>

The final area that I wish to return to is teaching and pedagogy. As has already been stated, teaching is not value-neutral or content free. The improvements that were made with individual teachers in schools 4., X. and Y. may have occurred because the teachers were being supported (during stage two of the first curve of the improvement process) to test and implement their new knowledge and skills about teaching methods in the context of not only the children's needs, their classrooms or subject(s), but also within the context of their own preferred approaches and priorities.

The evidence shows that the improvement of the quality of teaching methods makes a difference to teachers and children. However, if a school stops the process at

improving teaching alone, then it appears that the institutionalisation and, consequently, the sustainability of those improvements is difficult to achieve. For school improvement to impact on, affect and influence the standards of the pupils' achievement, there needs to be a process of describing, comparing and evaluating the different forms that teaching may take and the various ways that teaching methods and the curriculum may be combined. Questions of value, priority and purposes need to be addressed. Pedagogy connects the apparently self-contained act of teaching with the culture, structure and mechanism of the school as an organisation.

This, then, places a responsibility upon the school to enable teachers to close the gulf between education theory and the practice of teaching, as pedagogy is discourse and not merely procedure. Headteachers and senior managers will need to consider the forms of support that they are able to offer to enable teachers to move towards Bruner's four models of learners' minds and to understand how children think and learn.

Issues for further reflection

In this section, I would like to reflect on why I believe the work that I have undertaken is original and significant; to consider its contribution to existing knowledge; to reflect on the research methodology and some of the methodological tensions and to consider the research that I will be undertaking in the future.

<u>Why this research is original, significant and adds to existing knowledge</u>

This study was concerned with the processes and outcomes of planned pedagogical improvement in independent preparatory schools; a comparison of the processes and

consequences; ascertaining whether the evidence could be replicated and related to the experiences of the headteachers, teachers and other stakeholders in the six schools.

All commentators seem to agree that the key to unlocking the full potential of pupils in schools lies in developing the expertise of teachers and headteachers. Equally, research and inspection evidence demonstrates the close correlation between the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils and the links between classroom and school improvement. It has been these interconnecting links that lie at the heart of this study and why this is a significant piece of work that adds to existing knowledge.

Secondly, many research projects have examined how to develop whole school improvement strategies and processes in order to improve standards of pupil progress and achievement, whilst this study has focused on how to improve schools through pedagogical and classroom improvements that are sustainable. Learning and teaching are both inter-dependent and independent classroom processes. A teacher's purpose for teaching is to bring about learning and, broadly, any step taken to fulfil that purpose is called a 'teaching strategy'. The fact that classroom teaching and learning closely interrelate but are vulnerable to varying types of influence has a profound effect on how they are treated in analysis. Putting forward proposals about the management of pupils' learning implies an intimately connected account of what will make for effective pedagogy: theories of human learning and development set up criteria which have to be met by theories of teaching. Effective teaching must, by definition, lead to effective learning. Therefore, in studying school improvement focused on pedagogical developments, the findings significantly contribute to existing knowledge by demonstrating that effective school improvement needs to focus initially on teachers and classrooms rather than whole school structures.

The third reason is that the study investigates schools in a sector that has not been explored extensively, according to a search of existing literature and the views of the professional associations representing independent schools. This may be because it was believed that there was little to be learned from a group of schools that could be perceived, by some, to be elitist or because independent schools are believed to be unaffected by the developments within the state education system. Consequently, by focusing upon this group of schools, the aim has been to add to the limited empirical evidence found on this sector and to offer original evidence.

The research was intended to be exploratory and illuminative. Therefore, the principles underpinning the processes of exploration through case study and illumination, through the analytical processes of interpretation and discussion has enabled me to develop an empirical model of the processes capacity building at individual and school levels. This model of capacity building for pedagogical improvement drew on the practical knowledge and experiences of the headteachers and teachers that had been researched in depth and over a period of time. The exploration and development create a broader and original understanding of the concept of capacity building and its practical relevance for school leaders in sustaining improvement, so adding to existing knowledge.

Fifthly, the literature implies that schools that utilise capacity building are operating as highly effective schools. This appears to indicate that it is not a strategy that can be used by all schools for improvement. However, this research directly contradicts that thinking and shows that capacity building at individual and school level can be an effective strategy for most schools, and can provide the key to sustaining enhanced levels of pupil progress and achievement, whatever their growth state or stage in their

development cycle.

Lastly, many theoreticians produce complex models for school improvement and rarely offer advice or guidance to headteachers on where to begin. The literature provides models of what should be developed but is less articulate about how to manage these over time. They tend to revert to general metaphors when discussing the complexity of the interconnections between the different forms of capacity. However, this study has shown that organisational improvement can be derived from building individual capacity within classrooms, and describes and analyses the experiences of some schools as they moved through the process. This research adds to the knowledge base of practical ideas and strategies used by school leaders for sustained school improvement.

<u>Reflections on the research methodology and some of the tensions</u>

As I have undertaken this research, I have learned that fieldwork is personally and emotionally challenging. The development of a set of ethnographic research case studies is always constrained and regulated by the context in which it occurs. I have described in the methodology chapter (chapter 3) and in the case studies (chapter 4) some of the features which constituted the web of practices, events and relationships in the schools within which the research was set. All these events, especially within school 2., inevitably impinged upon the research. One of the tensions was dealing with the relationships between the subjects themselves and between the subjects and myself. I was aware of the problem of 'contamination' and understood the potentially negative effects that this could have on the practical and theoretical development within my own practice and the research itself and attempted to guard against this. The final aspect of methodology that I would wish to reflect on, is my use of case

study. There can be criticism of case study as some believe that it is difficult to generalise the emerging data. In order to ensure that the data is sound, I have collected information from a number of sources in order to derive analytical generalisations. I am not seeking to generalise to all schools or even to all independent preparatory schools. Rather, I have examined a group of schools in order to explore and expand on existing theories about pedagogical and school improvement and the management of change. Rather than seek clinical generalisations, I have drawn out analytical generalisations that are meaningful and relatable to practitioners, and the fact that I have used multiple case study means that the evidence is more compelling and could therefore be regarded as being more robust.

When reflecting on the outcomes of this study, it is obvious that there is further work to do and more issues to be investigated, and I hope to examine individual teacher capacity building as part of school improvement in a larger group of independent and international schools. (Wilson, forthcoming). This will become particularly relevant as schools generally, and independent schools specifically, face greater challenges caused by the demands for and the effects of external pressure for further change. An example of this is how the development of the Innovations Unit has had an impact on maintained schools, which will consequently have an impact on independent schools.

Summary

The research

This research has been concerned with the processes and outcomes of pedagogical improvement and the management of change in independent preparatory schools. The evidence was collected through multiple case studies over five years. Each case study consisted of a whole study, in which convergent evidence was sought regarding the

facts and conclusions for the case.

The findings

The case studies have offered evidence of the essence of the interactional processes that the schools had experienced during the school improvement process and an empirical model was proposed to suggest a possible way of understanding those processes, in order to sustain improvement.

The research shows that schools do have the capacity to improve themselves, if the conditions are right. The consideration of why the planned improvement is taking place is as important as how the process is to be implemented, resourced and managed. Indeed, this appeared to be an essential factor in creating the conditions.

Teachers can amend and adapt their practice by entering into a programme of capacity building that is focused on initially developing their knowledge and understanding of teaching methodology. The second stage in curve one enables teachers to implement this knowledge into the context of their work and the values of their beliefs and attitudes. This stage appeared to be essential and may be something that has implications for schools generally. The second curve of improvement shifted the focus to strategic school procedures, structures, and organisation, so enabling practitioners to do an effective job and to develop staff cohesion. However, the key to institutionalising and sustaining improvement was a recognition that highly effective teaching cannot remain isolated as an act and that it is developed by enhancing and developing teachers' pedagogical knowledge through discourse.

The relevance of the findings

A major goal in undertaking this research was to develop insights that had practical

value, were meaningful and relatable for teachers and headteachers and addressed issues and problems that they recognised and dealt with. I aimed to add to existing knowledge and to deepen understanding about the improvement process in independent preparatory schools, as this was an area that had not been previously studied, although it is relevant and relatable to all schools.

The thesis, therefore, explores and reflects the research process, the issues I have investigated and the values I hold. It synthesises and integrates my systematic reflection on and analysis of my own learning and educational development.

Within this dissertation, I consider that I have made an original contribution to educational knowledge and theory through my analysis of my own education practice, as I have sought to contribute to the understanding of pedagogical improvement and capacity building in independent preparatory schools. I offer an understanding of the theoretical antecedents of capacity building and the ways in which these different origins may influence my own and others' thinking, and possibly, practice. I offer an empirical model which incorporates individual and organisational capacity building into a process that may enable effective and sustainable pedagogical and whole school improvement to take place.

<u>Future research</u>

Indeed this leads to the final outcome of the need for future research. Firstly, there is the need to examine the work of headteachers and especially deputy headteachers in leading and managing this type of pedagogical improvement process. Although there is a wealth of literature on the role of headteachers generally, few have examined the position of headteachers in independent schools. The position and role of deputy

headteachers within independent schools is probably less understood and is an area that awaits investigation. The issue of developing dispersed and distributed leadership across the independent school is also an essential factor that requires further examination.

Secondly, this study has been concerned with improvements in pedagogy and teaching. I believe that there needs to be a closer focus on the impact of different pedagogical approaches on children's learning. It may be time that the gulf between pedagogy and teaching was closed.

Thirdly, the recent literature points to the need for greater understanding of the effects of school improvement on children's learning. At the present time, there is little clear evidence that demonstrates the actual effects of different improvement strategies. However, this work could lead to the formulation of performance indicators, which could be used to make comparisons between schools involved in improvement. There needs to be more understanding about good practice in school improvement, which may support schools as they inevitably embark upon the change process.

> Dynamic conservatism is a social phenomenon. It stems more from the propensity of social systems to protect their integrity and thus to continue to provide a familiar framework within which individuals can order and make sense of their lives, than from the apparent stupidity of individuals who cannot see what is good for them. (Everard and Morris, 1990)

Few individuals in a school appreciate how multidimensional the school improvement process really is, and may espouse a comfortable simplistic notion of it, which could hinder the improvement process because it diverts the headteacher and teachers from foreseeing all the implications. There exist in every school innumerable relationships, unwritten norms, vested interests and other characteristics that make improvement difficult. Headteachers and teachers who want to implement the improvement process, therefore, have a sizeable task on their hands. There is a need

for the staff to conceptualise the nature of school improvement and how it will impinge upon the school, as the process will affect values, assumptions and beliefs, and be affected by them. These values and beliefs will vary greatly and therefore, it is important that the improvement process is focused on the school's core task of teaching and learning.

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Appendices Contents Page

APPENDIX 1

Criteria for the selection of case study material reported in the text

Appendix 1: Criteria for the selection of case study material reported in the text of the thesis

Introduction

This appendix is divided into two sections. The first section provides an explanation of and reflection on the process for devising the criteria for the selection of the case study material reported in the text. The second part provides and example of this process.

Explanation and reflection

When I was reading and classifying the descriptions and comments of the subjects, I was not merely sorting data but also looking for the most distinctive characteristic that appear in those data; that is I was looking for structurally significant differences that clarify how people define some specific portion of their world.

When I single out one factor, I obviously leave out others that are contained in the data. There may be other highly important factors upon which all subjects agree and so I may not necessarily focus upon these. Also, I cannot take it for granted that the subjects will always take a holistic rather than atomistic view of the events. ***Therefore, the data focused upon must be a function of the issue within the question and the phase of the study.***

Within this framework I look for the most essential and distinctive structural aspects of the relation between the individual and the phenomenon. Leaving other aspects aside, I end up with categories of description, which though originating from a contextual understanding, are de-contextualised and may prove to be useful in other contexts.

Above all, each category is a potential part of a larger structure in which the category is related to other categories of description. Therefore, the finding of the categories of description was a form of discovery.

I believe that it would be possible to reach a high degree of intersubjective agreement concerning their presence or absence, if other researchers were to be able to use them. Therefore, I describe the levels of the process that I have been involved in below:

Level 1: Read and transcribe tape recordings of interviews, then summarise;

Level 2: Sort and classify themes from the raw data into categories – open coding (identify and name conceptual categories)

Level 3: refine data into deeper categories – axial coding

Level 4: select quotes that could be used

Level 5: write description – summary report

The next section of this appendix provides an example of this process.

Example from the audit trail for the selection of case study material

Level 1
Case Study Four - during the improvement process

The headteacher is lettered P. and teachers are numbered 1 – 19. This interview lasted for two hours and focused on what was happening during the phase of the pedagogical change.

The responses helped me to answer one part of a central question – Question 6: *What are the conditions and processes, which enable these independent preparatory* ***to promote*** *pedagogical improvement?*

Below is an extract from the summary of the transcription of the tape recording of the second interview with headteacher, whilst she was answering question 6. I listened to the tape twice and transcribed the main aspects.

> Well, after the audit and A.'s meeting with the staff, she then started coming into school. First of all she worked with pre KS1 and KS1: She discussed short term planning with the whole team and then with individuals, she observed lessons and gave individual confidential feedback —agreeing objectives for improving practice that the teacher's would then try out before her next visit. She helped them to make changes in the learning environment and with classroom organisation and management. At the end of each day, she both organised and led whole staff training or key stage specific training. This training focused on curriculum documentation, improving planning, improving teacher assessment, setting up target setting for pupils, classroom management and organisation, improving the quality of the learning environment, behaviour management and dealing with special needs and the very able. She then repeated the same process with key stage 2.
>
> After two terms we had introduced a whole school approach to planning and assessment:
>
> - Re-organised classrooms, refurbished them and improved the quality of the learning environment;
> - Set up basic curriculum organisation – such as policies, schemes of work and long term planning to ensure curriculum continuity and progression;
> - Appointed subject leaders and agreed roles and responsibilities;
> - Introduced monitoring and evaluation by the subject leaders from nursery to year 6 and provided time for them to do this;
> - Instituted weekly staff meetings and a full programme of professional development.
>
> The secret was the programme of staff development, because without improving their knowledge and skills, I could splash all the paint around – but it wouldn't have attracted the new parents – you can only sell a school when the teaching looks good, feels good and is good.
>
> After the first two terms of general workshops and A. working along side teachers, we then agreed that she would work with very specific people during the second year – supporting them in developing and applying this new knowledge. So she, returned to working with teachers – but not at the extensive level of the first year, this was very focused and was designed to meet the very specific needs of teachers. They were involved in the discussion and diagnosis of needs with A. There were no written or verbal reports to me – her job was to help the teachers.

A further example of level 1:

Summary of responses from the semi-structure interviews with teachers in school 4
(Teachers made more than one response)

1. What have been the consequences of the planned change process on teaching and learning?

Responses	**School 4: (19 teachers)**	
Planning has improved;	100%	19
Differentiation has improved;	100%	19
Teachers use a wider range of teaching methods;	100%	19
Teachers use these teaching methods more successfully;	78.90%	15
Teacher assessment information is collected more effectively & efficiently;	89.42%	17
Teacher assessment information is used more effectively;	89.42%	17
Pupil performance data is analysed more regularly;	100%	19
Pupil performance data is effectively used to analyse what a children needs next, in order to improve;	94.68%	18
Children are more involved in their own learning;	100%	19
Children are making improved progress;	89.42%	17
Other? • We are trying to develop thinking and communication skills into all subjects across the curriculum; • We are making changes to what we do in the curriculum; • We think more about how we teach than before.	84.16% 52.60% 100%	16 10 19

2. What have been the consequences for you?

Now receive more professional development;	100%	19
I use a wider range of teaching methods;	100%	19
I feel motivated;	100%	19
I believe that I am more analytical about the process of teaching and learning;	78.90%	15
I have more job satisfaction;	100%	19
I work harder;	36.82%	7
Other? • I am involved in other people's teaching; • I spend more time looking at other colleagues; • I think more about the process of learning compared to the past.	47.34% 47.34% 52.60%	9 9 10

3. What have been the consequences for the children?

Greater focus on children's learning;	100%	19
Children's progress and achievement has improved;	89.42%	17
Children are more involved in their own learning;	100%	19
Children are encouraged to think and talk more about their own learning;	89.42%	17
Children are more independent;	89.42%	17
Children are more motivated;	100%	19
Other?		
• We have had feedback from the secondary schools that the Yr 6 children were more confident and performed better at their interviews;	15.78%	3
• Children like the feedback.	78.90%	15

4. What are the consequences for the way the school is managed?

We talk about teaching more;	100%	19
We receive more professional development;	100%	19
We are involved in the decision making process;	78.90%	15
We talk more with parents and children about learning and not just achievement;	89.42%	17
There is improved communication and relationships between the teachers;	100%	19
Other?		

5. What have you learned?

I've learned to ask better questions of the children;	47.34%	9
I've learned the importance of being more involved in what is happening in other parts of the school;	31.56%	6
Not to be nervous about other people watching me teach;	63.12%	12
How to teach groups more effectively;	73.64%	14
Other?		
That good learning is good teaching and vice versa;	15.78%	3
Not to be frightened of change;	57.86%	11
How to talk less and let children respond more;	52.60%	10
To have the confidence to move away from the NLS and the NNS.	42.08%	8

Level 2: Taking a theme and developing categories

Theme: Impact of the role of External Adviser (REA) during the implementation of the pedagogical improvement

Categories:

1: classroom audit (CA)
2: short term planning (STP)
3: observation (OBS)
4: feedback (FB)
5:classroom organisation and management (CO&M)
6:curriculum documentation(CD)
7:staff professional development(SPD)
8: other.

Level 3: Developing deeper categories

1:analysis;
2:developmental feedback;
3:diagnosis;
4:accelerated performance
5:accurate reflection;
6:confidence;
7:understanding
8:individual coaching/training;
9:everyone/involvement;
10agreement;
11:wider range of teaching methods;
12:motivational;
13:on-task pupil behaviour;
14: other

Taken from transcription of tape recordings from the second interviews with teachers – the role of the external adviser. Parts of tape were coded e.g. pb12

Level 3 Categories – interviews with teachers								
Teachers	**Responses – key word categories**							
1	1	2	3	4			7	8 9 10 13
2			3	4	5	6	7	9 11
3		2	3	4		6	7	8 9 11 12
4		2	3	4	5	6	7	12 13
5		2	3			6	7	9
6		2	3		5		7	8 9 11 13 14
7	1	2	3				7	12
8		2	3	4		6	7	12
9		2	3		5	6	7	9 11 13 14
10		2	3	4	5		7	8
11	1	2	3		5			8 12
12		2	3		5			8 9 13
13		2	3	4		6		8
14		2	3				7	11 12 13
15		2	3	4	5		7	9 10 11
16		2		4			7	10 11
Level 4:Selecting quotes for case study material								
Quotes from teachers	2	6	14	11	3			
Tape mark No.	Pb1	Pb27	Pb31	Pb34.5	Pb12			

Level 5: Example of one extract from a summary report

Consequently, the external adviser observed the strengths and weaknesses of what was happening in classrooms, analysed pupil behaviour and performance data, fed back this information to individual teachers and groups of teachers, discussed teaching methods and styles and generally asked questions. This diagnosis of the developmental needs of children's learning based on careful analysis was believed, by the headteacher and most of the teachers, to lead to accelerated teacher performance, as the teachers perceived it to be an accurate reflection of classroom practice and pupil performance. This accelerated performance was described by the headteacher as a process where the teachers were prepared to 'try out' new or different methods, different forms of classroom organisation or different types of structure to the lessons. She believed that the accelerated performance resulted from the fact that the teachers were using a wider range of teaching methods that enabled the children to work more effectively and that this came about because of increased levels of teacher confidence and understanding of teaching methodology.

> I found it really helpful when X. was able to feedback to me about what was happening in my classroom. It was also useful in talking about individual children's progress that was specific to that child and my teaching methods. (Year 2 teacher)

> I liked being able to celebrate tiny successes with X. and I learned a lot because of the questions that she constantly asked. I felt more confident and I am sure that my knowledge of what was happening to me and the children improved, because it was very focused.
>
> (English co-ordinator)

The external adviser supported the teachers by facilitating the construction of shared understandings and meanings, at an individual level, between members of a subject or age phase department and across departments during the 'progress meetings'. This was focused on extending the skills, understanding and agreement on practice between teachers.

APPENDIX 2

Exploratory Study

2.1 Summary of the IAPS survey of head teachers' perceptions of change;
2.2 Summary of the transcripts from the specialist interviews

Appendix 2.1: EXPLORATORY STUDY

Summary of the Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools (IAPS) survey of headteacher's perceptions of change

Questionnaire sent to 500 headteachers of IAPS schools in January 1999. 275 schools responded. (55%)
(Piloted with 30 Junior School headteachers from the Girls Schools Association in November, 1998)
Brackets indicate the number of headteachers that made this response to the open questions.
All headteachers made more than one response to the open questions.

Effects of national government policies:		
1. Are you following the National Curriculum?	Yes **275**	No **0**
2. If yes, what were the effects?	• **Greater emphasis on ICT (42%);** • **Greater emphasis of design technology (31%);** • **Staff development required for teachers (63%);** • **Introduction of standard assessment tests (37%);** • **Introduction of teacher assessment (82%);** • **Introduction of whole school record keeping policy (71%);** • **Introduction of whole school planning policy (64%).**	
4. Have any of the other government policies had an impact on the school?	Yes **275**	No **0**
5. If yes, what are these policies?	• **Assessment and key stage tests (92%);** • **Inspection (100%);** • **League tables (42%);** • **Loss of assisted places (31%);** • **National Literacy Strategy (25%);** • **Base-line assessment (24%);** • **School-based Initial teacher Training (11%);** • **Changes to charitable status (7%);** • **Child protection and the impact on Boarding Schools (3%);** • **Threat from effective maintained schools 92%).**	
6. If yes, what were the effects?	• **Need for improved and enhanced professional development (71%);** • **Catering for needs of 2.5 year olds (48%);** • **Improvements in pedagogy (38%);** • **Need to recruit staff from the maintained sector (36%);** • **Need to recruit and retain staff who have experience of the above initiatives (20%);** • **Increased whole school policies rather than departmental initiatives (20%);** • **Changes to the timetable – a move away from the 35 minute lesson (15%);** • **Need for clarity in terms of roles and responsibilities for managing curriculum change (9%).**	
7. As a result of these curriculum changes, have you re-organised the school internally?	Yes **265**	No **10**
8. If yes, please explain.	• **Developed the role and responsibilities of the head of department and/or subject leader (37%);** • **Appointed a SENCO (32%);** • **Appointed an assessment co-ordinator (26%);** • **Introduced monitoring, evaluation and review of the quality of teaching and learning by middle managers (24%);** • **Introduced teacher appraisal (22%);** • **Developed a continuous professional development programme (15%;** **Re-organised the senior management team (13%).**	

Leadership and management:		
9. Have you had to lead and manage change during the last two years?	Yes **275**	No **0**
10 What were the changes?	• **Changes to the curriculum (82%);** • **Development of curriculum documentation (82%);** • **Introduction of base-line and formative assessment and record keeping policies (79%);** • **Changes to roles of and responsibilities of staff (78%);** • **Introduction of whole school policies (72%);** • **Early years curriculum (71%);** • **Improved buildings and resources (70%)** • **Contracts for parents (56%);** • **Marketing and publicity (41%);** • **Age range of the school (21%);** • **Gender balance of the school (3%)**	
11. How was this managed and led?	• **With governors and SMT leading the initiative (85%);** • **SMT and post holders (10%);** • **Headteacher and SMT (5%).**	
12. What are the main skills and expertise that headteachers require?	• **Ability to lead and manage staff (100%);** • **Strategic planning and direction (72%);** • **Communication skills (70%);** • **Able to manage change effectively (63%);** • **Knowledge of recent changes in the curriculum, teaching methodologies and research on learning (41%);** • **Understanding partnership with governors, parents and other schools (9%);** • **Knowing your own school (5%).**	
13. Has your role as a headteacher changed over the last five years?	Yes **275**	No **0**
14. How is this different from the past?	• **Greater involvement in leading and managing improvements in pedagogy (74%);** • **Involvement in parental problems and issues (69%);** • **Greater accountability to governors, staff and parents (51%);** • **Ensuring continuity and progression across the whole school (41%);** • **Greater involvement with the staff (18%).**	
15. Do you have any concerns about your changing role?	Yes **273**	No **2**
16. If so, what are these concerns?	• **Meeting the demands of parental expectations (63%);** • **Ensuring better trained and educated teacher work force (35%);** • **Maintaining the value added (examination results balanced against the breadth of the curriculum) (24%);** **Concerns about the ability to recruit and retain staff (18%).**	
17. Are there any achievements that you have particularly pleased with?	• **Developing effective organisational structures which enable the school to provide a broad curriculum, balanced against the advantages of specialist teaching (96%);** • **Developing expertise and skills in presenting and marketing the school (21%);** • **Improving the standards of pupil achievement**	
17. What kinds of support will headteachers require in the future?	• **Greater preparation and training for headship – NPQH or similar (92%);** • **Training on managing staff (86%);** • **Training on the management of resources and**	

	finance (62%); • Advisers from outside the school with a knowledge and understanding of national issues related to prep schools (57%); • Refreshment (e.g. sabbaticals or secondments) at 5 yearly intervals (31%); • Training on the latest research and knowledge on pedagogy (25%).	
School Community:		
18. What is your school roll?	**School rolls varied between 195 to 843**	
19. Has this increased or decreased over the last two years?	Yes **275**	No **0**
20. Why do you believe this has happened?	• Dissatisfaction with maintained schools (54%); • Breadth of curriculum that the schools offers (93%); • Small classes (76%); • Reputation of the school (71%); • Good discipline (17%); The school's results in national examinations (13%).	
21. What do the parents want for the children?	• Better standards of education (66%); • Smaller classes/better PTR (28%); • Better start to life/chance for future career (13%); • Better discipline (9%); • Better results (7%)' • Want the best for their child (5%); • Better facilities (3%); • Better teachers (2%).	
22. Do parents have a voice in your school?	Yes **275**	No **0**
23. How is this voice heard and acted upon?	• Complaints procedures (92%) • Parent/Teacher Association (41%); • Friends of the school (38%); • School Association (23%); • Form representatives (18%): • Parent Governors (7%); • Annual survey of parental opinions (10%) • Irregular survey of parental opinions (8%); • School focus group (2%)	
24. How many governors do you have?	**Figures varied between 9 and 25**	
25. Have any changes occurred in the governor's role over the last two years?	Yes **270**	No **5**
26. If yes, what are the changes?	• Greater interest and concern with the standards being achieved in the school (71%); • Strategic planning and direction of the school (62%); • Greater concern with parental views and anxieties (61%); • Appointment of staff (54%); • Examination results (28%); • Monitoring and evaluation of the school's policies (21%).	
27. Is governor training being undertaken?	Yes **195**	No **80**
28. If so, in what areas.	• Roles and responsibilities (93%); • Curriculum and pedagogy (88%); • Leadership and management (48%); • Appointment procedures (36%); • Discipline and dismissal of staff (24%); • Appraisal (17%); • Health and safety (14%); • Pastoral, social and personal care (11%); • Financial management (4%).	

50% of the headteachers who responded to this survey had been appointed since 1991.
42% of that number had had experience within the maintained sector.

Appendix 2. 2: EXPLORATORY STUDY
Summary of the Specialist Interviews
Interviewees: 1.Mr J Morris, General Secretary of Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools, (Refused to allow the interview to be tape- recorded)
2.Mr D Hanson, Director of Education – IAPS;
3. Mr J Hawkins, Chairman of IAPS and Preparatory School headteacher; (All IAPS interview were conducted in November 1998)
4. Mr D. Hart, General Secretary of National Association of Headteachers (NAHT). (Interview conducted in February 1999)

1. General Issues (for John Morris, General Secretary of IAPS, only)

1.1. What is the number of IAPS members?	500 in UK and 35 overseas;
1.2. Is this an increase or decrease?	Increase;
1.3. By what percentage?	3% over 2 years;
1.4.Is the enrolment of children into IAPS schools generally increasing or decreasing?	Increasing by 9% per year for the last four years;
1.5. Are schools generally in a sound financial position if we are faced with another recession?	Yes, but there could be problems for some of the Boarding Schools. 50% of IAP schools offer boarding and 10% of all children are boarders. This is a decease, as in 1995 68% of schools offered boarding and 15% of pupils were boarders. Therefore, some schools are in a vulnerable position.
1.6. What is the turn over in headteachers?	10%
1.7. What are the requirements for a headteacher to become a members of IAPS?	• Headteacher must be a qualified and practising teacher with sound and relevant experience for the post; • Headteacher should be autonomous and not have to report to the headteacher of a senior school; • The school should have an accountable and responsible governing body, unless it is in private ownership; • The school meets the IAPS minimum standards in terms of teaching, learning pupil achievement, facilities, staff numbers and contracts of employment; • School pays teacher salaries above the national standards; • Statutory employment, health and safety and other education and social services regulations are met. • All schools are inspected as part of the selection procedures and are then regularly inspected by the Independent Schools Inspection procedures and reports are public.

2. Effects of national government policies

	General Secretary of IAPS	Director of Education – IAPS	Chairman of IAPS and Headteacher of a prep School	General Secretary of NAHT
2.1. Are the IAPS member schools responding to the recent changes in national government's policies?	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes (We have a sizeable minority of our members who are also IAPS members)**
2.2. Are there discernible changes or developments that have happened in IAPS schools as a results of those policies, and if so, what are these changes?	• **Teacher induction;** • **Changes in the common Entrance examination – to bring it closer to the key stage 2 and 3 national tests;** • **Inspection of IAPS schools;** • **League Tables;** • **The possible introduction of a General Teaching Council;** • **Fairness at Work provision and EEC directive on working hours;** • **Salaries and contracts of employment.**	• **Literacy Strategy;** • **Competition from improved maintained schools;** • **Base-line assessment for the early years;** • **Inspection;** • **Training and development of middle managers;** • **Introduction of appraisal and performance management;** • **Parents Charter;** • **Pay structures and contracts of employment.**	• **Teacher recruitment and induction;** • **League tables;** • **Greater focus on English, mathematics and science;** • **The need to constantly re-invent ourselves.**	• **Role of governing body;** • **Relationships between governors and headteachers;** • **Monitoring performance and raising standards;** • **Moving from a paternalistic management style of staff;** • **Politically driven focus**
2.3. How is the IAPS / NAHT responding to these policies?	• **IAPS is not just responding to these policies but is critically engaged in a constructive relationship with the government – e.g. Partnership with maintained schools, value-added measures, NPQH, ITT, Base-line assessment and regular meetings with all agencies**	• **Developing support and advisory programmes for headteachers and potential headteachers;** • **National programme of professional development;** • **Encouraging AST and NPQH routes;**	• **Re-structuring national, regional and local committees – encouraging schools to work together;** • **Developing district structures to support schools;** • **Moving to competition within a mutually supportive structure**	• **IAPS headteachers are not under the same pressure as headteachers of maintained schools – they have more resources, greater choice and independence and less government interference.**
2.4. Are the changes in the Independent Schools Inspection procedures a result of central government policy?	• **We had our own inspection service previously, however, there was subtle pressure from Ofsted and the government to improve the rigour of the service;** • **However, pressure has also come from parents.**	• **The whole basis of inspection has changed – it used to be to satisfy the association that a school is worthy of maintaining its membership of IAPS –now there are elements of public accountability.**	• **Partly, but it also came from within the association and from parents.**	• **I would have to guess, as I do not know – but my guess would be, from the government pressure;** • **The government also makes a direct approach to these headteachers through conferences, etc.**

3. Other groups that can influence, affect or impact on the school

3.1. Is there any other group who are pressuring for change?	**Parents, IAPS and Governors**	**Parents, IAPS and Governors**	**Parents and IAPS**	**Parents**
3.2. Why do you think parents are placing such pressure on schools?	• **The profile of parents has changed – many are now earning less than £40,000 (31%) and have no experience of independent education themselves. They believe that they have buying a service or a product and consequently have high consumer demands and expectations;** • **Parents Charter.**	• **52% of all parents are "first-time buyers" and bring their experience and expectations of maintained schools with them;** • **22% of parents chose the independent sector because they were unhappy with the maintained sector. They require as a minimum, the type of education that they know and understand from the maintained sector plus more.**	• **Parents are better informed and more knowledgeable about what they want and expect for their child;** • **Parents Charter;** • **Dissatisfaction with maintained sector and determine not to repeat the experience.**	• **Standards debate in the media;** • **More knowledgeable parent body.**
3.3. How is IAPS exerting pressure on schools?	• **Through rigorous selection procedures;** • **Regular inspection;** • **Greater accountability.**	• **Inspection;** • **Improved professional development programmes;** • **Induction of potential and newly appointed headteachers;** • **IAPS policies and guidance on minimum standards.**	• **National, regional and local committees;** • **Improved professional development;** • **Higher standards of expectation of members of IAPS;** • **Inspection.**	
3.4. Are there problems confronting IAPS schools that we have not discussed?	• **National economic situation;** • **Governors who see the school "as a business";** • **Pressure to accept SEN children at a young age, which then has a detrimental impact on results;** • **Pressure for children to move to senior schools at 11 and not 14;** • **Pressure from the market to be competitive;** **Senior schools setting up their own Junior schools.**	• **HMC taking 11+ pupils;** • **Relationships with senior schools;** • **Children making little progress in the first two years at senior school;** • **Competition from good state schools;** • **Increasing tendency that the requirements for maintained schools are being given "regard" because of competition with state schools.**	• **League tables;** • **Need for bench mark data across schools;** • **Day schools having to cater for an ever lengthening day e.g. breakfast, after school clubs, holiday clubs;** • **Boarding schools moving towards flexi - boarding.**	• **Relationships between teachers and headteachers;** • **Complexity of the headteacher's role;]** • **Levels of administrative support;** • **Sustaining the motivation of teachers.**

3.5. You mentioned that governors exert pressure on schools – could you expand on this?	• **Governors often see the headteacher as the "chief executive" and perceive that their most important role is in the appointment of a new headteacher;** • **They also increasingly see themselves as accountable to parents – this is a new departure – caused by the increase in numbers of first time buyers;** • **Maintaining the salary levels.**	• **The move in governor's interest from "drains" to brains" is to be applauded, however, it often brings dangers of unrealistic expectations in terms of improving pupil standards of achievement coupled with a lack of knowledge of pedagogy and the curriculum – headteachers are occasionally placed under great pressure.**		

4. Leadership and management of IAPS schools (The changing role of headteachers)

4.1. What are the concerns of IAPS members?	• **Relationships and management of staff;** • **Relationships with governors;** • **Relationships with parents;** • **Pressure to change;** • **Relationships with senior schools.**	• **Maintaining knowledge and understanding of recent research on the curriculum and pedagogy;** • **Meeting individual pupils' needs;** • **Developing strategic management approaches;** • **Management of conflict and people.**	• **Narrowing of the curriculum;** • **Attracting staff who are prepared to work in a residential setting.**	• **Managing relationships and communications.**
4.2. What are the main skills and areas of expertise that headteachers of IAPS schools require?	• **Headteachers are taking their schools through a big shift in emphasis – they are independent schools but are not working in isolation. Therefore, headteachers need to have the skills of networking, working in partnership and building relationships with a range of organisations.**	• **Heads should be the "lead professional" and acquire the skills to manage people effectively, manage change;** • **Have a secure vision and understand about strategic planning;** • **Have a sound understanding of accountability**	• **Our schools have moved light years in the last decade – but our world has become ever competitive and headteachers are more accountable. They therefore, need sound leadership and management skills to support them;**	• **They require the same skills as any headteacher in the maintained sector but also the strength to be able to work in an isolated community and at times, in an isolated position.**

4.3. How is this different from the past?	• **Headteachers have always required leadership and management skills, but the levels of accountability, pressure from parents and impact of national government initiatives was not an issue in the past.**	• **Teachers also have very different expectations of schools and headteachers. Many of our teachers have worked in the maintained sectors – some are attempting to escape the paper workload and are reluctant to make changes and others become frustrated at the slow pace of development. This needs sensitive handling by handteachers.**	• **There were no threats to the breadth and diversity of the curriculum, less concern about accountability and certainly little pressure from parents;** • **The other area is the headteacher's role in developing middle managers – totally unheard of ten years ago.**	• **Accountability and higher expectations in society generally.**

APPENDIX 3

Information -- case study schools

3.1 Background information on schools 1 to 4;
3.2 Background information on schools X and Y;
3.3 Summary of the survey parental opinion;
3.4 Summary of the survey of pupil`s attitudes;
3.5 Summary of the survey of governor's attitudes.

Appendix 3.1: Background information on the case study schools

School 1

School 1 is situated in a leafy suburb, south of London. The school was founded in 1908. It is housed in attractive Edwardian buildings in pleasant surroundings. The gardens and playing areas are landscaped and surrounded by high fences and hedges. A school caretaker and his wife live on the site and care for it as if it is their own home. The external and internal decorations and fabric of the building are of a high standard. Many of the rooms on the ground floor have high ceilings, highly polished wooden block floors and the original fittings. French doors open onto terraces and patios. The rooms on the first floor are smaller and difficult to organise as classrooms, as these were originally the bedrooms. However, they are well organised, brightly decorated with displays of children's work that are colourful and carefully mounted. In addition, a self-contained two-room nursery unit, science room, art and design studio, a design technology area, ICT suite, music room and new reception/office area have been built in the last five years. All of the specialist subject areas are well equipped. There is a large library.

There are future plans to improve the staff room and lavatories and to refurbish the classrooms on the upper floor of the main building in the next three years. There is a rolling programme for redecoration and refurbishment throughout the school for the next five years.

The school has extensive playing fields and outdoor hard surfaces for PE and games, however, all indoor PE has to take place in the hall, which is also used for assembly, dance, drama, school productions and as a dining hall.

The school uses the National Curriculum and there is subject specialist teaching for music, science, design technology, PE and French from year 1 onwards.

The school community

The school caters for 198 pupils, aged 3 to 11 years with 16 teachers and a headteacher. There are also four classroom assistants, one after school care assistant, (as the school offers and extended day from 08.00 to 18.00), a secretary, caretaker, clearer and two dining assistants. The local independent senior school provides additional bursar support and cooked school lunches, as the two schools share linked governing bodies. There are fourteen governors. The governing body is now organised on a committee structure. This was introduced in 1998.. The governors have a strategic school development plan for the next ten years, which was devised in 1995. They have increased the feeds by 23% over the last five years. The fees are structured to be in the middle of the prep school fee band. They also sold a plot of land to finance the building programme.

50% of the teachers have been appointed to the school within the past three years. This was caused by teachers resigning, retiring or seeking other appointments beyond this school. This was the first major change in staffing to have happened to the school. It was a deliberate policy, carried out and implemented by the headteacher. She wanted to bring in "new blood" and to make appointments that would support the school development plan.

The school day is from 08.45 to 16.00, with cooked lunches being offered; tea is provided for the children who stay on for the after school care. Additional activities are offered at the end of the school day, such as ballet, tap dancing, individual music tuition, speech and drama training, ICT club, art club and a wide range of sporting activities. The school regularly undertakes residential visits within the UK and France.

Most of the children live within a five-mile radius of the school, however, 24 of the children travel from further distances. 98% of the children are transported to the school by car. There is a large car park with a one way system to cope with the traffic problem.

The school has positive links with other prep and senior schools in the area and has twice attempted to hold in-service days with nearby schools. However, this was unsuccessful as the professional development needs of the staff in the varying schools, was very different.

The school takes part in in-service opportunities that are provided by the local education authority. They use the LEA for the audited of Key Stage One (KS1) national test results and are members of the LEA early years committee.

The school has security locks with code pads on all outside doors, however, parents and visitors are quickly welcomed into the school by the receptionist/secretary. The reception area is comfortable and tastefully furnished with fresh flowers and samples of children's work on display. The school has a colourful glossy brochure for parents. The school has a parent/school association, which is a social/fund raising body only. Most parents belong to this and are actively involved in the school, although there are no parent helpers in the classrooms.

School 2

School 2 is situated in a cathedral city to the north of London. It is housed in buildings that were erected in the 1960's. The school opened in 1821 and is sited on sloping ground and therefore, the school premises are built on a number of levels. A senior school share the grounds. There is limited space for outdoor activities and children play. The quality of the fabric within the school is of a very poor standard, with threadbare carpets, poor quality of decoration (both internally and externally) and a low standard of cleanliness throughout. The classrooms in the pre-prep department, (KS1) are small, often furnished with very old and poor quality furniture, with a poor standard of decoration and poorly equipped. In addition, there is a purpose built art room, a design technology room and a science room. The specialist areas are well equipped and resourced.

The small reception office is shared by the receptionist and the bursar. The headteacher's office is adjacent to the boys' lavatory and is prey to a range of unpleasant odours. It is also a very small working space for the headteacher. The senior master and director of studies have separate offices, at some distance from the centre of the school.

There are future plans to re-decorate and re-carpet the school, to improve the staff room and the staff lavatories, as the teachers have to share these facilities with the children. The school is also due to take over some of the senior school's teaching space and to build a new reception and administrative area.

The school uses the National Curriculum and subject specialist teaching commences in Key Stage Two (KS2).

The school community

The school caters for 266 pupils, aged 3 to 11 years with 16 teachers and a headteacher. There are also two classroom assistants, the receptionist/secretary, bursar and two cleaners. The children share the senior school's dining facilities at lunch times. The two schools share the same governing body.

75% of the teachers have been appointed to the school within the past two years. This was caused by staff resigning or retiring on ground of ill health or by seeking appointments in other schools. The other changes in staff have been caused by the dismissal of two teachers on the grounds of incompetence. This is not unusual, as there has been major turn over of staff within the school for the last ten years.

The school day is from 08.45 to 16.00. Additional activities are offered at the end of the school day and features sports and games, music, chess, language clubs, (French, Spanish, Italian and German), ICT club, speech and drama training and a swimming club. The school regularly undertake residential visits within the UK. Most of the children live within the locality of the school. None of them travel more than 5 miles to reach the school. The school has links with the senior school, however, these tend to be focused on the sharing of facilities rather than expertise or professional development of the staff.

The school has security locks on the doors, but these are never in use. There is no reception area for parents and visitors. The school is severely hampered by its buildings and site.

The school has a shared governing body, which has an organised committee structure. This was introduced in 1996. The governors have a strategic plan for the development and improvement of both

schools. The schools have increased by 15% over the past three years. They are in the bottom end of the fee band.

The school has a parent school association which is a social/fund raising body only. Some parents belong to this (47%) and these parents are actively involved in the life of the school. There are no parent helpers working in the classrooms.

School 3

School 3 was founded in 1902 and is situated in a town on the northern outskirts of |London. It is housed in a Victorian building with new wings built in 1997, housing the pre-prep department, the science, art, design technology, special needs room and music rooms. It has pleasant grounds. The gardens, hard playing surfaces and the extensive playing fields are landscaped and surrounded by high hedges and a fence. The external and internal decoration is of a high standard. The Victorian house, which is the centre of the school is not ideal for teaching space, however, the staff have attempted to ensure that it meets the needs of the children. All classrooms are well equipped, bright and colourful with the children's work attractively displayed.

All of the specialist teaching areas are equipped to a very high standard and a new music and ICT block were completed in 2000.All of the specialist teaching areas are equipped to a very high standard a. The hall is used as a gymnasium and for assembly. There is a dining hall adjacent to the hall.

The school uses the National Curriculum and there is subject specialist teaching from the beginning of Key Stage Two. French, music and PE are taught by subject specialists in Key Stage One.

The school community

The school caters for 184 children, aged 4 to 11 years with 16 teachers and a headteacher. There are 3 classroom assistants and a nursery nurse who works in the reception class. The school operates an extended day from 08.00 to 18.00. There is also a bursar and school receptionist/secretary, plus a caretaker, two cleaners and six kitchen ladies.

30% of the teachers have been appointed to the school within the last three years. This was caused by teachers either gaining promotion or leaving the school, retirement and the dismissal of two members of staff.

The school day is from 8.45 to 16.00 with cooked lunch being offered; tea is available for those children who stay for the after school care or for the extra curricular activities. The additional activities are ballet, netball, swimming, music, musical tuition, chess, art, cookery and English Speaking Board activities.

All of the children live within five miles of the school. Most of them are transported to school by car. There is a one-way system and a staggered start and finish to the day, in order to cope with the traffic problems.

The school has security locks with code pads on all of the outside doors, however, parents and visitors are quickly welcomed into the school through an intercom system.

The school has a governing body that is made up of local business people and headteachers of other independent schools in the area. The governors are organised on a committee structure, receive governor training and have just devised a strategic plan for the school. They increased the fees by 30% over the last three years and are in the middle band of the fee scale.

The school does not have a parent/school association, however, there are many formal and informal events for parents, such as staff/parent dinners.

School 4

School 4 is situated in a town on the northern edge of the M25. It was opened in 1925 and housed in a 1950's two-storey building with a number of new additions, such as the nursery, the kindergarten and reception class. On the second floor, there is a purpose built science laboratory and an art and design technology studio. There have also been recent refurbishment's of the library, the ICT suite, the music room and the offices and reception areas. The school is situated on a very small plot of land, with very limited playing field facilities or parking areas. Major roads surround it and therefore, traffic congestion is a problem at the beginning and end of school hours. Despite these difficulties, the limited space has been used imaginatively and the displays of children's work is colourful and sensitively presented.

The internal and external decoration is of a high standard. The hard play surfaces are furnished with a wide range of play equipment for all ages of children. The large school hall is also the gymnasium. There is a separate dining area and kitchen. All of the specialist teaching areas are equipped to a very high standard and there are further plans to improve the buildings, in order to overcome the small size of the year 5 and 6 form rooms.

The school community

The school caters for 2540 children, aged 2.5 years to 11 years with 19 teachers and a headteacher. There are three classroom assistants who work with the kindergarten, reception and year one classes. The school operates an extended day from 08.00 to 18.00. There is also a bursar and two school secretaries, a caretaker, two cleaners, four kitchen assistants, a part time librarian, a ICT technician, a part time matron and a part time special needs assistant. There has been one retirement, two teachers have been promoted to senior posts in other schools and two teachers have left for other positions. With the exception of the replacement teachers, all the other staff are long serving members of staff.

A wide range of additional activities are available to the children at the end of the school day. The nursery offers afternoon sessions for the 2.5 year olds and morning sessions for 3 year olds. At the age of four, the children transfer to other independent schools or move into the kindergarten class. When they are 5, another group of children transfer into local maintained primary schools or other independent schools. However, the majority stay at school 4 and move into reception and begin to follow the National Curriculum. Subject specialist teaching is introduced in Key Stage Two, although the children in key stage one, have their music and PE with a specialist teacher.

The school has security locks with code pads on all of the outside doors. The governing body is made up of local business people. The are organised in a committee structure and completed a strategic plan in 1999. They have increased fees by 20% over the last five years and are at the lower end of the fee band. The school has a parent/teacher association, which is involved in the social and fund raising aspects of school life. Parents help in classrooms.

Appendix 3.2: Background information on Schools X and Y.

These are two very different schools.

School X has been through a turbulent time – numbers were dropping and the governors were beginning to consider the financial viability of the school before the appointment of the headteacher. The headteacher marketed the school and has increased numbers by 50% in three years. There has been a massive turn over in staff with three being dismissed for incompetence. Other new and younger staff have been recruited. The school is non-selective.

School Y is a very traditional none –selective preparatory school that serves a very renowned senior school. The staff are very stable and there have been no major changes in the organisation or curriculum of the school for over 2 years.

School X

- 300 children aged, 2.5 years to 11 years.
- School established in 1910 and has since merged with one other independent school (5 years ago).
- Headteacher appointed three years ago.
- Senior management team consists of Deputy, Director of Studies, Head of Nursery and Head of Pre-Prep (KS1).
- 24 teachers with average class sizes of 16.
- Specialist teaching from 7 years upward, although PE, Music, French and science taught by specialists to KS1
- Wide range of after school and extra curricular activities offered.
- During last two years, numbers have increased by just over 164 pupils.
- There was been a building programme – new DT and ICT suites, new library and new performing arts centre. Whole school has been redecorated and refurbished.
- Over 60% of staff were appointed in last 3 years – others left due to retirement, promotion and three were dismissed.
- Governors and parents – very supportive.

School Y

- 200 children aged 5 to 11 years.
- School established in 1866 and is linked to a senior school.
- Headteacher was appointed 10 years ago.
- Senior management team consists of deputy and director of studies.
- 16 teachers with average class size of 20.
- Specialist teaching throughout the school with setting for maths and English in years 5 and 6.
- Wide range of after school and extra curricular activities offered.
- School cannot take any more pupils due to the constraints of the site.
- New building programme developing new science laboratory and ICT suite and one additional classroom.
- Only one member of staff appointed during last two years – all other staff have been at the school for a minimum of 8 years.
- Governors and parents – very supportive.

Appendix 3.3
Summary of the survey of parental opinion within the four case study schools.

The Headteachers distributed 710 questionnaires to the families within the four schools in October, 1999.
433 families responded (61%)

Information about the parents

- 63% viewed preparatory school education as an "investment" in the future;
- 62% paid the school fees from their salaries without any additional or private income;
- 52% were sending their child to an independent school for the first time;
- 33% had made advanced financial plans for paying school fees
- 31% earned £40,000 per year or lower;
- 31% had no experience of independent education themselves;
- 9% were one parent families;
- 19% of parents had chosen independent education, because they were dissatisfied with their child's previous maintained school;
- 16% had examined examination results information, before making a choice of school;
- 13% of the main income earners in the family were women;
- 52% had considered maintained education for their child, before choosing an independent school.

Reasons for choosing to send their child to one of the four case study schools
Respondents were able to provide a range of answers to this open question

- 85% were influenced by the school's reputation locally;
- 82% were influenced by higher educational standards;
- 68% were influenced by what other people said about the school;
- 60% were influenced by their child's opinion when choosing a school;
- 39% said that the parental information in the school brochure informed their choice;
- 42% were influenced by the breadth and richness of the curriculum;
- 35% were influenced by the individual attention that their child would receive;
- 25% were influenced by small classes;
- 17% believed that the experience would provide their child with a better start to life and chance of a future career;
- 14% believed that their child would achieve better results;
- 11% preferred the orderly discipline;
- 10% believed that the school offered better facilities;
- 10% believed that the teaching was of a higher standard.

Parents were asked to rate their child's school as excellent/ very good, or good, or not very good or poor.

The following % of respondents rated the following points as excellent/verygood:

- 85% encouraging a responsible attitude to school work;
- 84% Reputation;
- 76% Encouraging a sense of social responsibility;
- 75% discipline;
- 74% Class sizes;
- 74% Overall examination results;
- 73% Sports opportunities;
- 73% Artistic and musical opportunities;
- 71% Extra curricular activities.

Other information

- 65% believed that their preparatory school offered better standards of education compared to the local maintained primary school;
- 68% of the preparatory school children had attended prepreparatory schools or departments;
- 52% of parents, with previous experience of independent education (69%), would have sent their child to a state primary school **in the past**, allowing them more time to save up for the fees of an independent senior school;
- 49% **now** believe that the outcomes and experience of an independent preparatory school education instilled at a young age lasts longer and would prefer to send their child to a good state secondary school at 11 years;
- 22% of parents were dissatisfied with an older siblings independent senior school;
- 51% of parents of boys regarded science, technology and sport as being key subjects that influenced them in choosing the school;
- 56% of parents of girls regarded art, music, and modern languages as being essential subjects that influenced them in choosing the school;
- 17% of parents had one child in independent education and one child in maintained education;
- Parents are shopping around, before choosing a school. 2.5 schools were visited during the process of choosing a school.

Issues that concern parents:

- 33% believed that their local maintained primary school was just as good as their child's independent preparatory school and that the standards should be higher within their child's prep school;
- 19% were dissatisfied with their child's preparatory school;
- 12% believed that the school should offered additional extra curricular activities;
- 11% wanted greater involvement in the school;
- 5% wanted to see smaller classes;
- 4% wanted better guidance on senior school education.

This survey was piloted with 2 different independent preparatory schools in February 1999.

Appendix 3.4
Summary of the survey of pupil attitudes within the case study schools.

The Headteachers distributed 112 questionnaires to the year 6 children in the four schools in December 1999. These were completed during school time. 112 responses were returned (100%) After completion of the questionnaire, the teachers sorted the children's responses into three approximate groups (high achievers, middle achievers, and low achievers) and removed the names of the children before passing them to me.
The questionnaire had been piloted with 36 year six children in two different preparatory schools in November 1999.

	High achievers	Middle achievers	Low achievers
What do you like about school?	• **Teachers;** • **Friends;** • **Games & PE;** • **ICT;** • **Maths;** • **Being a prefect;** • **Working with the younger children and people from the local community.**	• **Teachers;** • **Art;** • **Games & PE;** • **Maths;** • **French;** • **Art;** • **English;** • **Lunches.**	• **Teachers;** • **Friends;** • **Games & PE;** • **Drama;** • **Music;** • **Being a prefect;** • **Poetry;** • **Assemblies.**
What would you want to change in your school?	• **Small classrooms;** • **Amount of Prep;** • **Exams;** • **Have a larger playing field.** ;	• **The stairs & corridors;** • **The playing fields;** • **Prep;**	• **Prep;** • **Exams;** • **The lavatories and cloakrooms.**
What do you think your school is very successful in doing?	• **Making us all feel that we belong to a school family;** • **Feeling valued;** • **Being mature and** • **grown-up;** • **School trips;** • **Extracurricular activities.**	• **Providing feedback to us on our progress;** • **Knowing what we have to do next to improve;** • **School trips;** • **Working with our parents.**	• **Helping us to pass exams;** • **Making sure that we enjoy school;** • **Teachers are our friends;** • **School trips and activities after school.**

Appendix 3.5 Summary of the survey of governor's attitudes at the four case study schools.

Questionnaire sent to 37 governors in November 1999. (36 responded).
The questionnaire was piloted with two governors from two other independent schools.

Your role as governor:	
Could you describe what you see as your main tasks as a governor?	• **Ensuring that the legal requirements and constraints of the school as a charity are met (100%)** • **Protecting and managing the assets of the school (80%);** • **Deciding on policies 62%);** • **Ratifying policies that the headteacher brings to us (71%);** • **Monitoring and evaluating the day-to-day management and leadership of the school (32%);** • **Appointing the headteacher and supporting him or her (100%).**
What are governors at your school responsible for?	• **The school generally – especially the long term future of the school (100%)**
Who are governors, at your school, accountable to?	• **Parents;** • **Staff .**
Do the governors meet with the teaching staff?	**Yes** 36 / **No** 0
If, yes – when and for what purpose?	• **Education committee meetings, to receive reports from the teachers on subject evaluations and/or developments;** • **Social occasions between staff and governors;** • **School occasions –e.g. concerts, visits to classrooms by governors.**
What do you believe to be the biggest challenge for the school during the next 2 years?	**School 1** • **Maintaining pupil numbers;** • **Implementing the strategic plan.** **School 2** • **Recruiting and retaining teachers;** • **Improving communications between staff and between the school and the parents.** **School 3** • **Gaining planning permission for further building development;** • **Implementing the strategic plan.** **School 4** • **Improving the ICT provision and solving the parking difficulties;** • **Improving relationships between the school and the community.**

Factual information

Schools 1,2 & 3 have nine governors, school 4 has 10 governors. The chairs of the governing bodies have all been governors of their schools for a minimum of eleven years. Three of the governors were newly appointed during the academic year and all other governors have undertaken the role for a minimum of 5 years and a maximum of 19 years. Thirty-one governors have received training on their roles and responsibilities. Each governing body is organised on a committee structure, consisting of finance and general purposes, education, staffing, marketing and publicity and buildings. The committees and the full governing bodies meet termly. The headteachers attend the governors meetings and the sub committee meetings at all schools, but none of them are governors. In school 4 the SMT attend education committee meetings and the full governors meetings.

APPENDIX 4

Research instruments

4.1 Semi-structured interview schedule for teachers and headteachers before the improvement process;
4.2 Semi-structured interview schedule for teachers during and after the improvement process;
4.3 Semi-structured interview schedule for subject leaders and age phase leaders during the improvement process;
4.4 Semi-structured interview schedule for headteachers during the improvement process;
4.5 Semi-structured interview schedule for headteachers after the improvement process;
4.6 Prompts for the audit of school documentation.

Appendix 4.1: Semi-structured interview questions for the teachers and headteacher before the planned pedagogical improvement.

Schools 1 & 2
(Interviews took place between February and November 2000)
(Interview schedule piloted with one headteacher and one teacher at another school)

Part 1 (for teachers and headteacher) (*questions to ascertain any changes that may have taken place in the school during the last year.)*

I am going to ask you some general questions about changes that may have taken place in the school recently

1. Have there been any changes in the school during the last year?
2. What were these changes?
3. Did these changes effect:-
   * the curriculum;
   * classroom practice;
   * the way in which the school is managed or organised?
4. What were the effects upon each of these areas?
5. Was this a positive or negative change?
6. What caused these changes?
7. Was the change planned or unplanned?
8. How was it planned and by whom? (*if necessary)*
9. Who led the change?
10 What happened during the change process?
11 Did the change process itself have any effects on the curriculum or the way in which the school is managed or organised?
12 Were these the outcomes that you expected?
13 Did this change effect you and in what way?
14 What did you feel about that?

Part 2 (for teachers and headteacher) (*questions to examine the background to the planned change.)*
The school is now planning to make changes in the roles and responsibilities of post holders and to introduce monitoring, evaluation and review of the quality of teaching, learning and standards of attainment. I would like to ask you some questions about this.

15 Why are these changes to the role of the post holders taking place?
16 Why is monitoring, evaluation and review being introduced?
17 What are the reasons for these changes?
18 Who decided that these changes had to happen?
19 How and when was it decided?
20 Who is going to lead this?
21 What is planned to happen before the summer term?
22 What is planned to happen during the summer term?
23 How was this plan devised, agreed and communicated to the staff?
24 Will this effect your role as a subject leader and if so, how?
25 Will this effect the curriculum and if so, how?
26 Will this effect your work as a teacher and if so, how?
27 Will this effect the management and organisation of the school and if so, how?
28 Will there be any difficulties in introducing these changes to the role of the post holder and the introduction of M,E,R and if so, what will these be?

Part 3 (for teachers only) ***(questions to ascertain the level of experience of M,E,R and the present role of the post holder)***

29 Has another member of staff observed your teaching in order to monitor their subject area?
29a *If yes to question 29* - when and how was this carried out and what was the outcome?
30 as another member of staff observed your teaching in order to learn from it and improve their own teaching?
30a *If yes to question 30* - how was this carried out and what was the outcome?
31 Have you observed other members of staff teaching in order to monitor your curriculum area?
31a *If yes to question 31* - how did you carry this out and what was the outcome?
32 Have you observed other members of staff teaching in order to learn yourself?
32a *If yes to question 32* - how did you carry it out and what as the outcome?
33 Have you monitored a sample of pupils' work from across the school in your subject, by looking at their exercise books?
33a *if yes to question 33* - when and what was the outcome?
34 Is there a school policy on M,E,R?
35 What is your area of responsibility and your present role as a post holder?
36 Do you think this role will change?
37 How do you think it will change? *(If necessary)*
38 Are you appraised as a post holder?
39 I*f yes to question 38* - When does this appraisal take place and who leads it?
40 *If yes to question 38* - What aspects of your role are appraised?

Part 4 (for headteachers only) ***questions to ascertain the present relationship between the Head and the postholders and the quality assurance systems.***

41. Do you meet with the postholders?
42. *If yes* - could you describe what happens and how often?
43. What is the purpose of these meetings?
44. *If no to question 41*, do you monitor the work of the post holders?
45 *If yes to question 44*, how and when do you do this?
46. Is the quality of teaching, learning and standards of achievement monitored?
47 *If yes to question 46* - how is this done, who does it and when?
48 What use is made of this data?

Schools 3 & 4

(Interviews took place between April 2000 and March 2001) Interview schedule was piloted with one headteacher and one teacher in another independent school.)

Part 1 (for teachers and headteacher) ***(questions to ascertain any changes that may have taken place in the school during the last year)***

I am going to ask you some general questions about changes that may have taken place in the school recently

1. Have there been any changes in the school during the last year?
2. What were these changes?
3. Did these changes effect:- * the curriculum;
   * classroom practice;
   * the way in which the school is managed or organised?
4. What were the effects?
5. Was this a positive or negative change?
6. What caused these changes?
7. Was the change planned or unplanned?
8. How was it planned and by whom? *(if necessary);*
9. Who led the change?
10. What happened during the change process?
11. What were the outcomes of the changes?
12. Were these the outcomes that you expected?
13. Did this change effect you and in what way?
14. What did you feel about that?

Part 2 (for teachers and headteacher) ***(questions to examine the background to the planned change)***

The school is now planning to make changes and to introduce target setting at individual, class and school levels. I would like to ask you some questions about this.

15. Why is target setting being introduced?
16. What are the causes for this change?
17. Who decided that this change had to happen?
18. How and when was it decided?
19. Who is going to lead this?
20. What is planned to happen before the autumn term?
21. What is planned to happen during the autumn term?
22. Will this effect your role as a teacher or headteacher and if so, how?
23. Will this effect your role as a subject leader and if so, how? *(not applicable to headteachers)*
24. Will this effect the curriculum and if so, how?
25. Will this effect the way in which you plan, make assessments and record, if so, how? *(not applicable to headteachers)*
26. Will this effect the way in which you report to parents and if so, how?
27. Will this effect the management and organisation of the school and if so, how?
28. Do you think there will be any difficulties in introducing target setting and if so, what will these be?

Part 3 (for teachers only) ***(questions to ascertain the level of experience of target setting)***

29. Does your school have an assessment policy?
30. I*f yes to question 29,* does the policy clearly state the school's beliefs about assessment?
31. What are the principles for assessment practice in your school?

32 What strategies for assessment does your school have?
33 Briefly outline how you use assessment information;
34 What assessment information is passed on from class to class?
35 Does your school have a policy or guidelines in place on setting targets?
36 What pupil performance data is available in your school?
37 Does your school set school targets or class targets or group targets or individual targets at the present time?

If yes to question 37, the following questions will be asked:-

38 Could you briefly describe how the targets are set - how, when, where and who?
39 Are the pupils involved in this process and if so, how?
40 Do you record pupil targets and if so, where and what happens to this information?
41 How many targets do individual children have and for what purpose?
42 Are the targets measurable?
43 How and when are the targets reviewed?
44 What do you do if a pupil does not achieve their targets?
45 When new targets are set do they extend the original targets?
46 Do pupils appear to remember their targets?
47 Do you perceive pupils to be highly motivated by their targets?
48 Do you inform parents about their child's targets and if so, how?
49 Do you write pupils targets on their report?
50 Is someone responsible for implementing, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the effectiveness of setting targets in your school and if so, who is it and how do they do this?

If yes to question 49, the following questions will be asked:-

51 Is the target setting policy/guidelines part of the assessment policy?
52 Does the policy state whether there is a regular programme for monitoring target setting procedures?
53 Do individual pupils have personal targets that are discussed regularly and updated?
54 Are individual pupil targets set as a result of assessment carried out?
55 Do teachers negotiate with pupils and mutually agree appropriate targets?
56 Are the targets set measurable??
57 Are parents informed of assessment results and any targets that have been set?

Appendix 4.2 Semi-structured interview questions for the teachers during the pedagogical improvement process

I am going to ask you some questions about the planned change programme that your school is undertaking during this term. These questions are about your work as a teacher in the classroom?

1. What has happened during the first half term?
2. Has there been an effect on the curriculum?

If yes, ask them to enlarge and describe;

3. Do you do anything differently, compared to last term?

If the answer is yes – ask them to enlarge and describe, then go to question 4;

4. What do you do differently?

If the answer is yes – ask the questions 5 – 7;

5. How do you do things differently?
6. What has been the effect of this on you?
7. What has been the effect of this on the children that you teach?
8. Has there been an effect on the school?

If the question is yes, ask questions 9-10;

9. What has been the effect on the school?
10. Have there been any advantages in the changes that you have talked about – if so, what?
11. Have there been any disadvantages or problems in the changes that you have talked about– if so, what?
12. Has this first stage of the planned change been successful or not?
13. Why do you think this?
14. What is going to happen next?
15. What would you like to happen next?
16. Who led this change?
17. How did they lead this change?
18. Was anyone else involved?

If yes, ask questions 19-21;

19. Who were they?
20. What did they do?
21. Why did they do this?
22. Could the leadership of the change programme be improved?
23. How could it be improved?
24. Have you learned anything during this first half term?

If they answer yes, ask them to enlarge and describe.

25. What will you do next?

Appendix 4.3 Semi structure interviews with the subject leaders and age phase leaders during the process of the pedagogical improvement

I am going to ask you some questions about the planned change programme that your school has undertaken this term. These questions are about your work as a subject leader and co-ordinator.

1. What has happened this term?

Ask them to enlarge and describe;

2. Has there been an effect on the curriculum?

If yes, ask question 3;

3. What is the effect?
4. Do you do anything differently this term, as a co-ordinator compared to last term?

If yes, ask questions 5-11;

5. What do you do differently?
6. How do you do things differently?
7. What has been the effect on you?
8. What has been the effect on your role as a subject leader/age phase leader?
9. What has been the effect on the teachers who teach the subject/age phase, you are responsible for?
10. What has been the effect on the children?
11. Has there been an effect on the school?

If yes, ask questions 13-14;

12. How do you know?
13. What is this effect?
14. Have there been any disadvantages or problems in the changes that you have talked about – if so, what?
15. Have these problems been overcome?
16. How?
17. What would you like to happen next?
18. Have you learned anything during this change programme and if so what?

Appendix 4.4 Semi-structured questions for the headteachers during the pedagogical improvement process

I am going to ask you some questions about the planned change programme that has been taking place during this term.

1. What has happening during the term?
2. Have there been any effects on the teachers?
3. What are these effects?
4. Have there been any effects on the quality of the teaching?
5. What have been the effects?
6. How do you know?
7. Have there been any effects on the children?
8. How do you know this?
9. What were the effects?
10. What has been the impact on you as the headteacher?
11. What is going to happen next?
12. What would you like to happen next?
13. What have you learned from this process?
14. What have been the outcomes – specifically, in terms of the innovation and generally, in terms of the school?
15. Is there anything else that you would want to tell me about that is relevant to these questions and/or the change programme?

Appendix 4.5 Semi-structure interview schedule with headteachers after the planned pedagogical improvement

I understand that there has been pedagogical improvement in your school during the last academic year. Could you describe the improvement?

1. What was the objective?
2. How was this planned?
3. Who was involved in the planning?
4. Who led the improvement plan during implementation?
5. Who was involved?
6. Can you describe the process that your school has been through?
7. Was the implementation of the plan monitored and evaluated?
8. Who monitored and evaluated?
9. What happened to the information that arose from monitoring and evaluation?
10. Has there been an impact?

If so, ask the next questions (11-15):

11. What has been the impact on the children?
12. What has been the impact on the standards/quality of teaching and learning?
13. What has been the impact on the teachers?
14. What has been the impact on you?
15. What has been the impact on the school?
16. What are the consequences of the pedagogical change?
17. What is going to happen next?
18. What have you learned?

Appendix 4.6 Audit of School documentation

(Audit of documentation to take place during September 1999)
The following information to be found either from an audit of school documentation or by questions to the Assessment Co-ordinator or Director of Studies) *(questions to ascertain the school systems and processes for assessment and target setting)*

1 Is there an assessment policy in the school?
If yes to question 1, the following questions will be asked:-

2 Does the policy clearly state the school's aims for assessment?
3 Does the policy outline the strategies for assessment in school?
4 Does the policy identify points at which pupils are to be assessed?
5 Does the policy state how the assessment information is to be used?
6 Does the policy set out what records of pupils' performance are to be kept?
7 Does the policy state whether there is a regular programme for monitoring assessment procedures?
8 Is someone responsible for monitoring assessment procedures, if so who?
9 Was the policy discussed and implemented by all teachers currently working in the school?
10 Does the policy state a time for review?
11 Does the teachers planning have clear learning objectives?
12 Does teachers planning identify points at which pupils are to be assessed?
13 Does teachers planning identify which aspects of learning are to be assessed?
14 Are assessment tasks and tests co-ordinated across the school year?
15 Is evidence kept to illustrate pupils' attainment?
16 Is the evidence discarded once its usefulness is past?
17 Do records provide a clear indication of pupils' strengths and weaknesses?
18 As a result of assessment tasks or tests are targets set for the overall improvement of pupils' performance?
19 Is there a policy or guidelines in place on setting targets?

If yes to question 19, the following questions will be asked:-

20 Is the target setting policy/guidelines part of the assessment policy?
21 Does the policy state whether there is a regular programme for monitoring target setting procedures?
22 Do individual pupils have personal targets that are discussed regularly and updated?
23 Are individual pupil targets set as a result of assessment carried out?
24 Do teachers negotiate with pupils and mutually agree appropriate targets?
25 Are the targets set measurable??
26 Are parents informed of assessment results and any targets that have been set?

APPENDIX 5

Summary of data from teacher interviews

5.1 Summary of semi-structured interviews with teachers from schools 1 and 2 before the improvement process;
5.2 Summary of semi-structured interviews with teachers from schools 3 and 4 before the improvement process;
5.3 Summary of semi-structured interviews with teachers from schools 1 and 2 during the improvement process;
5.4 Summary of semi-structured interviews with teachers from schools 3 and 4 during the improvement process;
5.5 Summary of semi-structured interviews with teachers from schools 1 and 2 after the improvement process;
5.6 Summary of semi-structured interviews with teachers from schools 3 and 4 after the improvement process.

Appendix 5.1 Summary of the interview data with the teachers in schools 1&2 before the planned pedagogical improvement

	School 1	School 2
Has change happened in the last year?	Yes	Yes
Was this planned of unplanned[change?	During the previous year, this was carefully planned, structure and managed change. However, before that it was unplanned and ad-hoc, based upon professional instinct of the headteacher and a response to parental and governors pressure.	During the last three years, the changes and developments have been planned very carefully, however, they have not always been communicated effectively to the staff. This situation and changed and improved during the last year.
What were the causes, consequences and outcomes of this previous change?		
Causes:-	• headteacher appointment; • falling rolls; • parental dissatisfaction;	• inspection, • headteacher appointment, • turn over of staff, • parental dissatisfaction.
Consequences:	• major changes to curriculum documentation, • planning processes, • organisation of school, • staffing appointments, • introduction of appraisal, etc. • Increase in work load for staff; • headteacher illness,	• major changes to curriculum documentation, • planning processes, staffing appointments • school organisation, • introduction of appraisal, etc. • Staff left, retired and walked out! • Extreme hostility and negative relationships • Headteacher illness.
Outcomes:	• Improved continuity and progression between key stages, • improved communications and relationships with staff and parents, • improved working conditions, • teachers are more involved, accountable and confident.	• Improved continuity and progressions between key stages, • improved communications and relationships with staff and parents, • teachers more involved, accountable and confident.
Present roles of post holders	• documentation, • resources, • oversight of medium term planning.	• documentation • resources.
Are post holders paid?	Yes	No

Do post holders have job descriptions?	Yes	Yes
Appraisal? **What were causes of planned change in the role of post holders?**	Yes • appraisal and the negotiation of job descriptions that is due to take place; • headteacher's appraisal; • school improvement processes.	Yes • headteacher/HMI action plan; • inspection and parents; • post holders themselves demanding it.
What were the causes for the planned introduction of M,E,R?	• to support SDP; • to give headteacher more control; • to improve quality of teaching and learning; • to improve standardised test results.	• planned change in roles and responsibilities of post holders; • SMT to delegate more responsibility and tasks; • to improve standardised test results.
How is the intended change being planned and introduced?	Planned by head/SMT and led by headteacher/director of studies and critical friend Most staff in agreement	Planned and led by headteacher/ director of studies and critical friend All staff in agreement.
Spring term	• Devised timetable for action; • Undertaken INSET and preparation; • Devised classroom observation schedule; • Now agreed job descriptions; • Agreed upon processes of monitoring - commencing with English.	• Agreed action to be taken; • Undertaken INSET and preparation; • New job descriptions agreed; • Commencing with English and mathematics in summer term; • Curriculum audit for all subjects being undertaken within Spring term; • SDP to be written in summer term.

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Appendix 5.2 Comparative factual data from interviews with teachers from schools 3 & 4 before the planned pedagogical improvement.

	School 3	School 4
Has change happened in the last year?	Yes	Yes
Was this planned or unplanned change?	• When headteacher was appointed the change was unplanned - although there was a commitment to change from the governors. • After the 1997 SDP was given support by governors and SMT, there was a clear planned programme for change. • Staff became more involved in planning and decision making process. • After 1998 when the difficult relationships with two teachers were resolved, careful communication of planning processes was developed. • Since 1999 governors and staff involved in strategic planning for change and development.	• When headteacher was appointed, she had a plan for change but this was not communicated to staff and they were not consulte4d. • After 5 months of intense hostility and I member of staff left the school, there was a compromise between head and key members of staff. • Staff who became SMT helped to draw up the next SDP - focused upon change and improvement in standards of teaching, learning and achievement. • Now all staff involved in planning and decision making process.
What were the causes?	• Governors deliberately appointing a headteacher to bring about change; • Inspection and the concern about the report being made public; • Concern over possible loss of numbers if and when the report was made public.	• Headteacher; • SMT; • Inspection.
Consequences?	• EY policies and schemes; • Major changes to curriculum and documentation; • Introduction of M,E,R through post holders; • Appraisal; • Professional development and the appointment of a school adviser; • Re-negotiated job descriptions; • Appointment of a bursar; • Appointment of SENCO and development of SEN policy; • Governors training;	• Re-organisation of roles and responsibilities of post holders and re-negotiated job descriptions; • Appraisal; • Curriculum documentation and planning; • SEN policy and appointment from within the school of a SENCO; • New ICT suite, library and resources area; • New nursery buildings; • Focus on teaching and learning;

	• Staff and governor involvement in SDP planning; • Increase in teachers' workload; • Retirement and dismissal of 2 members of staff; • Difficult relationship between 1996-1998 during initial unplanned change process.	• Full time deputy; • Improved ICT facilities in classrooms; • Improved playground facilities; • Whole school approaches to planning and assessment.
Outcomes?	• Positive Inspection report; • Improved continuity and progression within the curriculum, planning and subject teaching across the school; • Improved assessment and record keeping; • Teachers enjoying work and feel involved; • Improvement in standards of attainment in maths, PE and French; • Focus on improving standards in all areas of learning; • Appointment of Director of Studies to take responsibility for overseeing the quality of teaching and learning; • Monitoring of performance data, planning, samples of children's work, observation of classrooms by post holders.	• New SMT and post s of responsibility for all staff; • Pay rise for SMT; • New contracts for all teachers; • New job descriptions; • Total change in school organisation; • Improved continuity and progression in the curriculum and planning; • Positive Inspection report; • Demand for places in the school with waiting lists for all age groups; • Teachers feel happier and involved in the decision making processes; • Focus upon the quality of teaching, learning and standards of achievement.
Present role of post holders	• Subject responsibility for quality of teaching, learning and standards of achievement; • Oversight of documentation, resources, teacher's planning; Scrutiny of children's work; • Observation of teaching with feed back to teachers and regular reports to SMT; • Monitoring of performance data.	As in school 3 plus sharing of expertise through demonstration teaching or working alongside colleagues, organising and leading in-house training workshops.
Are post holders paid?	Yes	Yes
Do post holders have JD/	Yes	Yes
Appraisal	Yes	Yes

Do teachers set targets for children's learning at the present time?	No	No
What were the causes for the introduction of target setting?	• Recent Inspection report high lighted the area as one of the key issues. • Teachers request for in-service support on short term planning and differentiation - led to the identification of this are - then was included in the SDP.	• Inspection report high lighted the area as one of the key issues. • School also identified the need and included this in the SDP; • SMT believe that it will be popular with parents.
How is the intended change being planned and introduced?	• To be led by headteacher; • Inset in summer term 2000; • Agree action plan for development; • New record keeping system to be trialled • New reporting system to be trialled; • Target setting for the first time in June; • Communicated to parents via reports in July; • To be monitored during Autumn term by post holders.	• To be led by SMT and Head; Inset in summer term 2000; • target setting recording sheets to be devised and agreed by staff; • Targets to be set in June; • Communicated to parents via reports in July; • Post holders to monitor; • Pupils and parents to receive a questionnaire on target setting in Autumn term.

Appendix 5.3: Summary of the semi-structured interview answers from the teachers in schools 1 & 2 during the pedagogical improvement process
School 1: 16 teachers responding.
School 2: 16 teachers responding

1. What has happened during the first half term?
(Respondents made more than one response)

Response:	**School 1**	**School 2**
In-service training	100 %	100%
Agreed action plan	100%	85.6%
Implemented action plan	100%	90%
Re-negotiated JDs	100%	100%
Classroom observation	94.2%	45%
Received developmental feedback	92%	0%
Other	5%	15%

2. Has there been an effect on the curriculum?

Response:	**School 1**	**School 2**
Yes	34%	16.5%
No	66%	73.5%

3. Do you do anything differently, compared to last term?

Response	**School 1**	**School 2**
Yes	100%	90%
No	0%	10%

4. What do you do differently, compared to last term?
(Respondents made more than one response)

Response	**School 1**	**School 2**
Improved short term planning	72.4%	84.2%
Improved teacher assessments	65.5%	34%
Improved the quality of presentation of pupil's work	43%	72%
Scrutiny of pupil's work	88.2%	89.5%
Improvement in continuity and progression across year groups	54%	17.5%
Improved differentiation of learning for individuals/groups of children	62.4%	11.5%
Keep classroom tidier	5%	65%
Other	10%	23%

5. How do you do things differently?
(Respondents made more than one response)

Response	School 1	School 2
Improved use of pupil performance data	82%	45%
Plan more closely and frequently with colleagues	72%	24%
Meet more regularly with age group or subject colleagues	56%	44%
Spend more time on planning and preparation	48%	94.5%
Other	5%	3%

6. What has been the effect of this on you?
(Respondents made more than one response)

Response	School 1	School 2
Spend more time on planning and preparation	100%	100%
Increased number of meetings	90%	100%
Feel that I have improved my planning, preparation and assessment	80.5%	10%
Feel in greater control of pupil's learning	75%	35.5%
Feel overloaded	35%	56%
Other	17.5%	21%

7. What has been the effect of this on the children that you teach?

Response	School 1	School 2
Children spend more time on task	67.5%	54%
Children are making improved progress	33.5%	56%
Standard of presentation of work by children has improved	87%	68%
Better links between teaching and prep	63%	14%
Children offered more time for thinking	56.5%	0%
Children appear to be enjoying their learning more than previously	68%	52.5%
Other	5%	5%

8. Has there been an effect on the school?

Response	School 1	School 2
Yes	100%	100%
No	05	0%

9. What has been the effect on the school?
(Respondents made more than one response)

Response	School 1	School 2
Improved co-ordination across year groups in English	94%	25%
Improved co-ordination across years groups in mathematics	98%	0% - not applicable
Improved teacher's planning	68.5%	34.5%
Improved the quality of teaching	33%	10%
Made communications and relationships worse than before	0% - not applicable	86%
Other	12%	15%

10. Have there been any advantages in the changes that you have talked about – if so, what?
(Respondents made more than one response)

Response	School 1	School 2
Improved communication and understanding about teaching and learning in English	34%	23.5%
Improve communication and understanding about teaching and learning in mathematics	72%	0% - not applicable
Improved planning across the year groups	35%	41%
Improvement in pupil progress in English and mathematics	61%	75% (English only)
Other	5%	12%

11. Have there been any disadvantages or problems in the changes that you have talked about– if so, what?
(Respondents made more than one response)

Response	School 1	School 2
Increased workload	35%	56%

Caused problems with communications and relationships	0%	86%
Lack of confidential developmental feedback has caused lack of trust	0%	100%
Increased number of meetings	25%	100%
Feel victimised	0%	68%
Poor management has led to previous problems re-surfacing	0%	65%
Other	3%	14%

12. **Has this first stage of the planned change been successful or not?**

Response	**School 1**	**School 2**
Yes	100%	10%
No	0%	90%

13. Why do you think this?
(Respondents made more than one response)

Response	School 1	School 2
Lack of leadership	0%	80%
Effective leadership	95%	0%
Poor communications and relationships	0%	100%
Good communications and relationships	100%	0%
Constant amending of action plan	60.5%	0%
Quality of developmental feedback by co-ordinators	75%	0%
Other	0%	10%

14. What is going to happen next?
(Respondents made more than one response)

Response	**School 1**	**School 2**
Complete action plan	100%	10%
Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what has happened	10%	10%
Receive more in-service training	33%	0%
Receive more feedback on other subjects	75%	0%
Refuse to continue with the action plan	0%	90%
Other	10%	20%

15. What would you like to happen next?
(Respondents made more than one response)

Response	School 12	School 2
To receive more professional development	45.5%	25%
Accelerate action plan into other subjects	80%	0%
End the action plan	0%	90%
Improve communications and relationships	05	90%
Other	15%	15%

16. Who led this change?

Response	**School 1**	**School 2**
Headteacher	0%	100%
Headteacher and SMT	54%	0%
Headteacher, SMT and external adviser	46%	0%

17. How did they lead this change?
(Respondents made more than one response)

Response	**School 1**	**School 2**
Gained agreement from staff	65%	10%
Provided support	100%	15%
Provided training	100%	100%
Provided effective communication – both formally and informally	67%	5%
Were prepared to be flexible	50%	5%
Ensured that plan was working effectively	75%	5%
Other	20%	10%

18. Was anyone else involved?

RESPONSE	**School 1**	**School 2**
Yes	100%	50%
No	0%	50%

19. Who were they?

Response	**School 1**	**School 2**
Subject leaders	70%	25%
External adviser	15%	75%
Governors	10%	0%
Others	5%	0%

20 What did they do?

Response	School 1	School 2
Helped to develop observation schedule	65.5%	15%
Involved in decision making processes	45%	0%
Supported and developed the role of the subject leaders	32.6%	0%
No idea	0%	85%
Other	5%	0%

21. Why did they do this?

Response	School 1	School 2
Wanted to be involved	68%	20%
Was asked to be involved	20%	40%
Part of their contract	0%	25%
Wanted to destroy the action plan		10%
Other	12%	5%

22. Could the leadership of the change programme be improved?

Response	School 1	School2
Yes	33%	90%
No	77%	10%

23. How could it be improved?

(Some respondents made more than one answer and others (school 1) did not answer)

Response	School 1	School 2
More time for planning and assessment	10%	68%
Time made available within school hours	5%	56%
Improved communications and relationships	5%	95%
Developmental feedback to be confidential and one to one	0%	100%
Other	5%	15%

24. Have you learned anything during this first half term?

. (Respondents made more than one answer)

Response	School 1	School 2
How little I knew about other parts of the school	47%	82%
How to improve my teaching	65%	25%
How to improve my work as a subject co-ordinator	42.6%	33%

The thinking that goes into the decision making processes at whole school level	41%	0%
How to use pupil performance data	66%	82.5%
How to improve my planning and assessment	71%	10.5%
Other	16%	22%

What will you do next?

(Respondents made more than one response.

Response	**School 1**	**School 2**
Continue to support the implementation of the action plan	80.5%	10%
Refuse to be involved in monitoring and evaluation	0%	90%
Seek advice from my professional association	0%	90%
Continue to develop my knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning	65%	10%
Other	15%	24%

Appendix 5.4: Summary of the semi-structured interview answers from the teachers in schools 3 &4 during the pedagogical improvement process
School 3: 16 teachers responding.
School 4: 19 teachers responding

1. What has happened during the first half term?
(Respondents made more than one response)

Response:	**School 3**	**School 4**
In-service training	100 %	100%
Review of assessment policy & practice	100%	100%
Use of pupil performance data	100%	100%
Introduction of target setting record keeping system	100%	100%
Development of action plan	100%	100%
Implementation of action plan	100%	100%
Other	6.25%	0%

2. Has there been an effect on the curriculum?

Response:	**School 3**	**School 4**
Yes	6.25%	10.52%
No	93.75%	89.42%

3. Do you do anything differently, compared to last term?

Response	**School 3**	**School 4**
Yes	100%	100%
No	0%	0%

4. What do you do differently, compared to last term?
(Respondents made more than one response)

Response	**School 13**	**School 4**
Improved short term planning	75%	78.90%
Improved teacher assessments	25%	36.82%
Now use pupil performance data to track individual pupil progress	37.50%	84.66%
Discuss and agree targets with pupils	100.%	100%
Monitor pupil progress more closely	93.75%	100%
Meet with other colleagues who teach my pupils	62.5%	94.68%
Provide parents with information on progress towards achieving targets	100%	100%
Other	12.50%	0%

5. How do you do things differently?
(Respondents made more than one response)

Response	**School 13**	**School 4**
Improved use of pupil performance data	81.25%	73.64%
Plan more closely and frequently with colleagues	75%	84.66%
Meet more regularly with age group or subject colleagues	62.5%	89.42%
Spend more time on assessment and monitoring progress	50.00%	94.68%
Other	6.25%	5.26%

6. What has been the effect of this on you?
(Respondents made more than one response)

Response	**School 3**	**School 4**
Spend more time on planning and preparation	100%	100%
Increased number of meetings	100%	100%
Feel that I have improved my planning, monitoring and assessment	81.25%	47.34%
Feel in greater control of pupil's learning	75%	78.90%
Feel overloaded	37.50%	52.60%
Other	0%	5.26%

7. What has been the effect of this on the children that you teach?

Response	**School 3**	**School 4**
Children know the next steps for improvement	81.25%	94.68%
Children are making improved progress	75%	89.42%
Better links between school and home	62.50%	94.68%
Children offered more feedback, orally and in writing	50%	94.68%
Children appear to be enjoying their learning more than previously/enhanced motivation.	75%	57.86%
Other	6.25%	0%

8. Has there been an effect on the school?

Response	School 3	School 4
Yes	100%	100%
No	0%	0%

9. What has been the effect on the school?
(Respondents made more than one response)

Response	School 13	School 4
Re-organisation of staff 7 management structure	93.75%	0% - not applicable
Changes in assessment policy and practice	100%	100%
Changes made to types & frequency of summative assessment	81.25%	89.42%
Changes made to whole school record keeping system and reporting to parents	100%	100%
Greater support in the classroom	0% - not applicable	100%
Other	12.50%	5.26%

10. Have there been any advantages in the changes that you have talked about – if so, what?
(Respondents made more than one response)

Response	School 3	School 4
Improved communication about learning with pupils	87.50%	100%
Improve communication about pupil's progress with parents	75%	78.90%
Improved planning and assessment across the year groups and the whole school	56.25%	73.64%
Higher levels of teacher confidence	31.25%	68.75%
Improvement in pupil progress	75%	78.90%
Other	6.25%	5.26%

11. Have there been any disadvantages or problems in the changes that you have talked about– if so, what?
(Respondents from school 2 made more than one response)

Response	School 3	School 4
Increased workload	37.50%	57.86%
Increased number of meetings	75.00%	100%
Other	6.25%	5.26%

12. Has this first stage of the planned change been successful or not?

Response	School 3	School 4
Yes	100%	100%
No	0%	0%

13. Why do you think this?
(Respondents made more than one response)

Response	School 3	School 4
Effective leadership	93.75%	100%
Good communications and relationships	100%	100%
Constant amending of action plan	62.50%	100%
Continuing support of the external adviser	62.50%	100%
Quality of professional development	75%	89.42%
Other	0%	12.50%

14. What is going to happen next?
(Respondents made more than one response)

Response	School 3	School 4
Complete action plan	100%	100%
Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what has happened	37.50%	47.34%
Receive more in-service training	31.25%	89.42%
Investigate pupil involvement in assessment	0% - not applicable	94.68%
Start on next implementation	0%	84.66%
Other	12.50%	10.52%

15. What would you like to happen next?
(Respondents made more than one response)

Response	School 12	School 2
To receive more professional development	68.75%	100%
Implement next phase of SDP	81.25%	42.08%
Focus on group & individual teaching methods	0%	89.42%
Review strategic plan	0%	94.68%
Other	12.50%	5.26%

16. Who led this change?

Response	**School 1**	**School 2**
Headteacher	0%	0%
Headteacher and SMT	0%	0%
Headteacher, SMT and external adviser	100%	100%

17. How did they lead this change?
(Respondents made more than one response)

Response	**School 1**	**School 2**
Gained agreement from staff	81.25%	100%
Provided support	100%	100%
Provided training	100%	100%
Provided effective communication – both formally and informally	56.25%	78.90%
Were prepared to be flexible	50%	89.42%
Ensured that plan was working effectively	75%	78.90%
Other	18.75%	0%

18. Was anyone else involved?

RESPONSE	**School 1**	**School 2**
Yes	100%	100%
No	0%	0%

19. Who were they?

Response	**School 1**	**School 2**
Age phase leaders	75%	68.38%
External adviser	18.75%	100%
Governors	6.25%	0%
Others	0%	0%

20 What did they do?
(Respondents made more than one answer)

Response	**School 1**	**School 2**
Provided training and support in classrooms	68.75%	100%
Provided feedback	43.75%	100%
Supported and developed the quality of the targets	50%	100%
Other	6.25%	0%

21. Why did they do this?

Response	**School 1**	**School 2**
Wanted to be involved	68.75%	15.78%
Was asked to be involved	18.75%	84.66%
Part of their contract	0%	0%
Other	12.50%	0%

22. Could the leadership of the change programme be improved?

Response	**School 1**	**School2**
Yes	18.75%	10.52%
No	81.25%	89.42%

23. How could it be improved?
(Some respondents made more than one answer)

Response	**School 1**	**School 2**
Use of technology to ease burden of record keeping	75%	89.42%
Subject leaders now have to become more involved	12.50%	68.38%
Reporting to parents needs to be reviewed	62.50%	78.90%
Form teacher's role needs to be reviewed	6.25%	21.04%
Other	6.25. %	0%

24. Have you learned anything during this first half term?
(Respondents made more than one answer)

Response	School 1	School 2
Improved use of assessment data	62.50%	52.60%
How to improve my teaching	68.75%	89.42%
How to discuss learning with children – that is meaningful	75%	57.86%
Monitoring and tracking individual progress	50%	63.12%
Improved differentiation	68.75%	84.66%
Beginning to understand how to vary and change teaching to meet individual needs	75%	68.38%
Other	12.50%	10.52%

What will you do next?
(Respondents made more than one response.)

Response	School 1	School 2
Continue to support the implementation of the action plan	100%	100%
Continue to develop my knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning	68.75%	100%
Other	12.50%	0%

Appendix 5.5: Summary of semi-structured interviews with teachers in schools 1 & 2 after the pedagogical improvement process

What have been the consequences of the planned change process of teaching and learning?
(Teachers made more than one response)

Responses:	**School 1: (16 teachers)**		**School 2: (16 teachers)**	
Planning has improved;	100%	16	43.75%	7
Use whole class, group and individual teaching methods;	100%	16	31.25%	5
Differentiation takes place in most lessons;	87.50%	14	25%	4
Better use of assessment data;	93.75%	15	12.50%	2
Learning is more appropriately matched to the children's needs	87.50%	14	12.50%	2
Improved continuity between year groups in planning;	100%	16	6.25%	1
Greater focus on children's needs:	100%	16	0%	0
Changes have been made to the curriculum in the light of children's needs.	25% - in English and maths	4	0%	0
Other? Things are worse than before.	0%	0	93.75%	15

1. What have been the consequences for you?

I receive positive and constructive developmental feedback;	100%	16	0%	0
The feedback has had a positive effect on my teaching;	100%	16	0%	0
I think about my teaching methods more frequently than before;	100%	16	37.50%	6
I believe that my teaching has improved;	93.75%	15	0%	0
I feel better informed about what I teach;	100%	16	0%	0
I feel better informed about how I teach;	68.75%	11	0%	0
I believe that the children are making better progress;	87.50%	14	0%	0
I feel more involved and motivated;	100%	16	0%	0
Other? I feel more de-motivated; I feel de-skilled; I have learned what not to do.			62.50% 87.50% 31.25%	10 14 5

3.What have been the consequences for the children?

Children are more involved in their learning;	68.75%	11	0%	0
Children waste less time than before;	75%	12	0%	0
Children know and understand what they have to do next to improve:	18.75%	3	0%	0
Children are making better progress:	87.50%	14	0%	0
Children are receiving improved feedback;	56.25%	9	0%	0
Children are involved in a wider range of learning methods;	93.75%	15	0%	0
Other? Improvement in children's behaviour; Things are worse for the children; Things have not changed for the children.	43.75%	7	 31.25% 68.75%	 5 11

4. What are the consequences for the way the school is managed?

There is a clear management structure;	87.50%	14	18.75%	3
We have been involved in the decision making process in devising the SDP;	100%	16	12.50%	2
There is increased shared responsibility;	75%	12	0%	0
There is increased support	100%	16	37.50%	6
There is an increased/improved staff development programme;	100%	16	50%	8
Communication has improved;	81.25%	13	56.25%	9
Other? Relationships are improving this term; We are slightly more involved in decision making than before.			81.25% 68.75%	13 11

5. What have you learned?

We can improve our teaching;	75%	12	0%	0
I am clearer about my strengths and weaknesses as a teacher;	87.50%	14	0%	0
I know what I have to do to improve my teaching;	87.50%	14	0%	0
It is better to work as a team;	43.75%	7	100%	16
We need to involve the parents and the children in improving teaching and learning.	37.50 % 6		25%	4
Other? A school cannot work effectively without good communications and relationships; Teachers need to be involved in the decision making process; Teachers have to be part of the management structure.			 100% 62.50% 37.50%	 16 10 6

Appendix 5.6: Summary of responses from the semi-structure interviews with teachers in schools 3 & 4 after the pedagogical improvement process

(Teachers made more than one response)

1. What have been the consequences of the planned change process on teaching and learning?

Responses	School 3: (16 teachers)		School 4: (19 teachers)	
Planning has improved;	100%	16	100%	19
Differentiation has improved;	100%	16	100%	19
Teachers use a wider range of teaching methods;	100%	16	100%	19
Teachers use these teaching methods more successfully;	50%	8	78.90%	15
Teacher assessment information is collected more effectively & efficiently;	81.25%	13	89.42%	17
Teacher assessment information is used more effectively;	43.75%	7	89.42%	17
Pupil performance data is analysed more regularly;	100%	16	100%	19
Pupil performance data is effectively used to analyse what a children needs next, in order to improve;	68.75%	11	94.68%	18
Children are more involved in their own learning;	75%	12	100%	19
Children are making improved progress;	81.25%	13	89.42%	17
Other?				
• We are trying to develop thinking and communication skills into all subjects across the curriculum;			84.16%	16
• We are making changes to what we do in the curriculum;			52.60%	10
• We think more about how we teach than before.			100%	19

2.What have been the consequences for you?

Now receive more professional development;	100%	16	100%	19
I use a wider range of teaching methods;	100%	16	100%	19
I feel motivated;	87.50%	14	100%	19
I believe that I am more analytical about the process of teaching and learning;	37.50%	6	78.90%	15
I have more job satisfaction;	87.50%	14	100%	19
I work harder;	100%	16	36.82%	7
Other?				
• I am involved in other people's teaching;			47.34%	9
• I spend more time looking at other colleagues;			47.34%	9
• I think more about the process of learning compared to the past.			52.60%	10

3. What have been the consequences for the children?

Greater focus on children's learning;	100%	16	100%	19
Children's progress and achievement has improved;	81.25%	13	89.42%	17
Children are more involved in their own learning;	75%	12	100%	19
Children are encouraged to think and talk more about their own learning;	31.25%	5	89.42%	17
Children are more independent;	37.50%	6	89.42%	17
Children are more motivated;	75%	12	100%	19
Other? • We have had feedback from the secondary schools that the Yr 6 children were more confident and performed better at their interviews;	6.25%	1	15.78%	3
• Children like the feedback.	81.25%	13	78.90%	15

4. What are the consequences for the way the school is managed?

We talk about teaching more;	100%	16	100%	19
We receive more professional development;	100%	16	100%	19
We are involved in the decision making process;	81.25%	13	78.90%	15
We talk more with parents and children about learning and not just achievement;	43.75%	7	89.42%	17
There is improved communication and relationships between the teachers;	100%	16	100%	19
Other?				

5. What have you learned?

I've learned to ask better questions of the children;	31.25%	5	47.34%	9
I've learned the importance of being more involved in what is happening in other parts of the school;	24.00%	4	31.56%	6
Not to be nervous about other people watching me teach;	50%	8	63.12%	12
How to teach groups more effectively;	62.50%	10	73.64%	14
Other? That good learning is good teaching and vice versa; Not to be frightened of change; How to talk less and let children respond more; To have the confidence to move away from the NLS and the NNS.	0%		15.78% 57.86% 52.60% 42.08%	3 11 10 8

APPENDIX 6

Summary of data from post holder interviews

6.1 Summary of the key extracts from the semi-structured interviews with subject leaders in schools 1 and 2;

6.2 Summary of the key extracts from the semi-structured interviews with age phase leaders in schools 3 and 4.

Appendix 6.1 Summary of the key extracts from the semi structured interviews with the subject leaders in schools 1 & 2 during the pedagogical improvement process
School 1: 2 co-ordinators responding (English and mathematics);
School 2: 1 co-ordinator responding (English)

1. What has happened this term?

School 1: English co-ordinator	School 1: mathematics co-ordinator	School 3: English co-ordinator
• The in-service training that was organised was excellent. It provided the opportunity for all staff to consider their own role with monitoring and evaluation as well as that of the co-ordinator. It was the best INSET that we've had. • As you know the observations are now completed and we are moving into thinking about the implementation in other subject areas. The biggest surprise for me was the quality of discussion that I have had with colleagues. I think that this is the first time that I have ever talked about real issues of pedagogy.	• The action plan had already been drawn up in draft by the SMT with M, but for once there was real discussion and debate about the order of doing things and the priorities. I think that the successes that we've had this term are to do with ensuring that everyone was clear about the purposes. • The re-negotiation of job descriptions was also helpful as it focused us all on what we should be doing as co-ordinators and set out the expectations of all of us. • However, the big breakthrough has been with actual teaching. The confidential developmental feedback to teachers, arising out of the observation has been incredible. It has helped us all to focus on what we actually do with children. I think that the combination of good professional development, in order to develop knowledge, skills and confidence with a focus on pupil learning has been the key.	• The staff training went well and everyone seemed to be excited and interested. The trainer was very approachable and ensured that everyone was involved. • The action plan which K and I devised, has been published and all teachers knew that I would be visiting their classrooms. • The problems have come with both my observations and the difficulties in providing feedback. I really needed more training and quite honestly have made a bit of a dog's dinner out of it. When K printed my comments to everyone, the problems really began.

2. Has there been an effect on the curriculum?

• I would say that it has been fairly minor. We have looked at the quality of presentation of children's work, but nothing that has had an impact in a major way.	• The main impact in mathematics has been on the teaching of mental maths. It was always a bit hit and misses before, so as an outcome of the monitoring process, I was able to feedback to individual teachers and the whole staff. I think that they were surprised and agreed that this had to be tackled. I mean surprised that we weren't teaching it consistently. So you could say, that there has been an impact or effect, as we have re-examined the maths scheme and policy.	• No, I don't think so and this wasn't the purpose as far as I am concerned.

3. **What do you do anything differently this term, as a co-ordinator, compared to last term?**

• Scrutinising short term planning and providing feedback, observing classrooms and providing feedback, scrutinise children's work. These are all new tasks.	• The big difference is my involvement in colleague's planning, teaching and assessment. I have a much clearer picture of our strengths, weaknesses, continuity and progression – not just the curriculum, but also the quality of teaching and learning.	• The big difference is that I have been into classrooms when teaching is actually happening. In the past, the teacher would have stopped, if you went into a classroom and wouldn't have started teaching again, until you left. Also, there is the issue of observing teaching, which I have enjoyed but which has caused so many difficulties.

4. How do you do things differently?

• For me, the difference is that I have an over view, which is important, but even more important is this focus on pedagogy	• I am involved with colleagues in a way that has never happened before. I think this constant consideration of how children's	• As I said before, it is being in classrooms and supporting teachers. This is what I intend but because of the resistance to K

and the impact on children. This is totally new to me and I almost feel out of my depth. Fancy a teacher saying that.	learning can be improved by improving what we do and not by doing more, is the big difference. It is so much more professional.	and the action plan, it is all falling to bits.

5. What has been the effect on you?

• I have found it challenging, tiring and yet exciting. It is about developing our skills and confidence, so that we can improve teaching. The strongest effect has been on making me reflect on my own teaching and of course, it has added to my workload. I am definitely working longer hours and much harder than every before.	• I think that I have a slightly increased level of status in the school, not because I am a co-ordinator or a member of the SMT, but because I am talking with colleagues about the real job and have been able to help or support some of them.. The effect has been that my confidence has increase, I feel highly motivated and I want to know more.	• The whole thing has had a bad effect on me because I feel guilty about what is happening and what is going to happen. Its no secret that K will have to step down and this will be detrimental to the school, her and me. In fact, I can't sleep well at night and I keep wishing that I had put more thought into what I said and how I said it.

6. What has been the effect on your role as a subject leader?

• I'm a better subject leader and co-ordinator because I am better informed and actually feel responsible for English across the school. I also think that I now have a clearer view of our strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. But the biggest difference is this focus on teaching and its impact on learning.	• I think that I am better at what I do, because I am more strategic about the role. I think that this whole process has highlighted the importance of subject leadership and how co-ordinators can be a force for improvement in teaching. The other big difference is that as the maths co-ordinator, I am seen, not as an expert, but as someone who is able to support in a different way.	• It has made the job bigger and probably higher status. It has enabled me to talk with colleagues generally in a way that hasn't happened before.

7. What has been the effect on the teachers who teach the subject you are responsible for?

• Everyone is more in tune with each other because we are not focusing on what but how and why we teach certain things. It has made the teachers feel more accountable and responsible for what they are actually doing. I also think that it has given them the language and the space and time to talk about teaching English and Literacy. That is important when we want people to feel successful and confident.	• Without doubt, the quality of teaching has improved slightly, mainly because we are all thinking about teaching methods and styles. It's fascinating to hear two particular colleague's debate a point on group work rather than talk about horses and the last show-jumping event.	• This whole business has demoralised and demotivated them. They probably do an even worse job than before, as it has given them all an excuse. Some of them were looking for that excuse and I have provided them with it. I know that they have learned that by working together they can be a destructive force.

8. What has been the effect on the children?

• Because teachers are thinking more about their short term planning and differentiation, I have some evidence that shows that the differentiation has improved and that the range, type and balance of activities that are being provided for them is wider, more exciting for them and more motivating. So I think it has been a very positive impact.	• The teachers meet together more and talk more about individual children. Now the effect of this is that there is greater consistency, in key stage 2, across each of us who are subject teachers. It means that we are beginning and I say on beginning, to provide a more coherent and consistent approach to the management of the children, expectations but also the range and type of teaching methods. I think that our assessment has improved a tiny bit and this often means that children are getting slightly better feedback, both orally and in writing.	• Not good, not good at all. They see teachers standing in huddles and whispering together. I don't think that teaching or learning has improved, although I do believe that short term planning and preparation for teaching has definitely improved. Who knows, if all of this hadn't happened, perhaps there would have been a more positive effect.

9. Has there been an effect on the school?

Yes	Yes	Yes

10. How do you know?

• I know from simple things such as the planning, assessment folders and so on, that there has been an effect across the school. But actually, it's more than that. It is to do with the quality of what is happening and that this quality is no longer in pockets. I am not trying to say that it is totally consistent and of the same quality throughout all classrooms, but there is definitely an improvement.	• I know by the best route, I know because I have spent time in classrooms, with the staff and with the children. There is definitely an effect on the school. • The other indicator is the staff room. There is a slightly different atmosphere and a more professional type of conversation.	• People don't speak openly with each other and there is great suspicion. Also K spends more time in her office and cries a lot. In fact, most of the women cry a lot. Is that enough evidence?

11. There must have been some problems, what were they and how did you tackle them?

• Initial resistance, which was broken down by the quality of the INSET, the constant involvement of all of the staff in the decision-making processes and the feedback of information have been really important. M has tried to take everyone with her and I think that they feel that this matters a great deal because they can see the effects.	• The biggest problem was getting over this business of having someone else in the classroom monitoring. Once teachers began to see that it was for them then things got easier. I also think that I had certain barriers to overcome in my new role and again the INSET helped and also the presence of X (external adviser) who gave some good advice to me.	• The biggest problems have been the break down in relationships., the suspicion and the hurt. It all becomes very personal and teachers can be quite child like at times. We have not overcome them at all and if anything, each day gets worse. I think that we need some big team building effort and a frank discussion to clear the air and then back into it. This won't go away. We will have to do it.

12. What would you like to happen next?

• I want us to extend the work that we have done beyond the core subjects, once we have tackled science and ICT. I also think that we have to focus on what has really gone in during this last term and build on it. We are only at the beginning and its quite complex to be able to see what is really happening.	• I think that we can now consider developing this terms work and move into other subjects. But more importantly we have to start improving our knowledge and skills in other aspects and areas of teaching.	• For the situation to stabilise , so that we can begin to rebuild the relationships and improve understanding in order to build trust. It will need some tough negotiation and some straightforward and honest conversations between everyone. But it's got to happen. We've gone backwards.

13. What have you learned?

• I've learned a lot about myself. I now know that I can lead this type of improvement and development. I have learned to be confident about what I do and to work with and consult others who are affected by the development.	• I've learned that you can do difficult things quickly and fairly easily if you get the conditions right in the first place and then you develop people before and as you go along. This is an important lesson for me.	• I believed that the school was stable and now I know that this was a façade. It just needed some small thing to bring the whole school to a halt in a destructive way. So I didn't really know the school that well. I think that that is the biggest lesson in not taking things, situations or people for granted and preparing the way properly. I will never make the type of mistakes that I have made, again.

Appendix 6.2 Summary of the key extracts from the semi structured interviews with the age phase leaders in schools 3 & 4 during the pedagogical improvement process

School 3: 2 co-ordinators responding (Key stage 1 and Key stage 2);
School 4: 2 co-ordinators responding (Key stage 1 and Key stage 2)

1. What has happened this term?

School 3: KS1 co-ordinator	School 3: KS2 co-ordinator	School 4: KS1 co-ordinator	School 4: KS2 co-ordinator
• Since the beginning of term and the in-service training, things have gone fairly well. We have introduced target setting and are meeting the objectives of the action plan.	• I think that it's incredible what has happened. I won't go into all of the actions but the fact that we have a whole school innovation being implemented coherently is wonderful. It's the first time it's happened.	• The things that we planned to happen are on track but more important than that is how teachers are doing it. For the first time, everyone is using pupil performance data and I have seen a real improvement in planning, differentiation, teaching and the pace of teaching.	• We have made a break through. This is a major thing. I think that its because we are looking at improving teaching and learning that it has happened. The other thing that only occurred to me in the supermarket last night, is that we are managing it quite well.

2. Has there been an effect on the curriculum?

• Not really and there wasn't the intention to have an effect on the curriculum. We are trying to improve our teaching, by being clearer about what children need and how we can meet that need.	• I would say no. the effect has been on teachers and as a consequence on children.	• Not at all. The curriculum inevitably is discussed in our progress meetings, but it is more about teaching and learning.	• Well, in a round about sort of way. We haven't really changed anything but I think that we are beginning to look at it differently. Rather than say, we must teach this and that, we're now saying how can we do this better. That in itself has implications for the curriculum.

3. **What do you do anything differently this term, as a co-ordinator, compared to last term?**

• I meet more with colleagues to talk about the children that they teach and to consider how we can accelerate their progress. I also have a better understanding of what we do well and those areas that we need to develop.	• I have never examined spreadsheets of children's progress before at progress meetings or thought about how we can make changes to what we do or considered the impact on children. I do quite a different job now and have a feeling of ownership about children's progress.	• Well all of the meetings and the scrutiny of data and setting of targets is new. But I think that I am involved in something that is much more fundamental than that. With X (external adviser) being in the classrooms and supporting us individually and as a key stage group, we have focused our key stage meetings in a very different way. We now talk about the job and I think that I am different because of that. I am different as the key stage 1 co-ordinator because of the role but also because of my new learning about myself as a teacher.	• I know that we are seeing through this action plan with all of its objectives but there is something else that I am doing that is quite different. I now talk to teacher colleagues in my department about children and their achievement. not just those children who are scholars or a pain, but all children. This constant focus and consideration of what we do and how we do it, is amazing. I feel that I now ask better questions as the key stage leader.

4. **How do you do things differently?**

• I don't think that I can answer that because I have never thought about it. Ask me that again in the future.	• I am involved much more with my team in talking about actions that we can take to improve learning. I think that I am learning new management	• Now that's difficult. How I do it is by reminding people why we are doing this and then encouraging them to talk about their problems or	I make sure that I don't waste peoples time and I have tried to build trust and honesty about what is going on in my own classroom and what I know is happening in

	skills and that I probably manage the department better.	anxieties. We never did that before. If you had a problem, you kept it to yourself as it might have been seen as a weakness or fault of your own. Now we are more professional and I try to keep us focused.	others. I have learned this from X. I also ask lots of questions rather than always try to give the answers. Before as the leader, I felt that it was my job to solve every ones problem, now I am beginning to be confident enough to know that I can learn from others and that I don't have all of the answers. I suppose that I am a little more sensitive and certainly no longer see myself as the boss of the team.

5. What has been the effect on you?

• It's been tiring but exciting. The effect is that I feel re-energised by all of this.	• I feel that I am being more effective in my role and this is encouraging and motivating. I also feel more responsible and that is quite daunting and challenging. I think the effect is that I am a better key stage co-ordinator.	• The effect has not been any different for me than for anyone else. I think that we are all more confident about what we are doing, feel more knowledgeable about out trade as teachers and also feel some satisfaction in observing the immediate impact on the children.	I feel real ownership of what is happening. I always identified with my department and perhaps tried to develop a mini school. This term I have felt a bigger sense of ownership about the whole school and my role in that. I also feel that I have grown as a practitioner as well as a manager.

6. What has been the effect on your role as a key stage co-ordinator?

• It's added to my workload but has probably enabled me to be a better co-ordinator. You see I have more information about the children and what the teachers are doing.	• We meet more often as a team and we are more focused. One by-product that I hadn't even thought about is the fact that it has improved the standard of the end of term reports that colleagues write. They now have better assessment data and more secure and accurate information about children's progress which supports them in writing better reports. That actually makes my life easier.	• I am definitely more proactive in terms of teaching and learning. Before, my role was quite organisational and administrative. I still do those things, to ensure the smooth running of the department but they are no longer my priorities.	• I would say that I am more hands on than I used to be, in terms of expectations, quality of planning, assessment and how we use information. I also now find myself thinking and talking about teaching methods and what works and what doesn't. I think that my role has become more professional and important.

7. What has been the effect on the teachers who teach the subject you are responsible for?

• Without doubt, teachers are working harder and have a lot more meetings to attend. These meetings are also much more active and involve everyone in a way that didn't happen before. I think that some feel slightly overloaded but the majority are enjoying what is happening and feel successful.	• You will have had your ear bent about increased workload, so I won't go into that. It has clearly effected teachers and it had to. The biggest effect has been on what we do and how we try to match it to the children's needs. I think that we are better at planning prep and also giving children feedback.	• Teachers are very involved and before this didn't always happen. The reason for this is because of X. She comes into their rooms and mine and makes you feel that you can and should do it. I mean improve. We are all feeling more confident and informed about the impact of our own work.	• It's been like a rejuvenation for some people. Of course, we are working differently to the past, but there is a greater sense of this is where we are going and therefore it's easier to decide what to do.

8. What has been the effect on the children?

• Children know what they need to do to improve and there are better links with the parents, which has a positive effect on the children.	• They were full of suspicion at first, but now they think that targets are great. I think that the quality of the feedback, through marking and verbally is so important. It means that children now what they have to do and isn't that a key component of being an effective learner?	• There has definitely been a positive effect on the children. I think that they feel in control more than in the past. I also think that they are enjoying their learning much more because it makes sense.	• I have a story for you. B came to me the other day and showed me some writing. It was great and I wondered why she was showing it to me. She said, do you know that is the first time I have produced writing of this standard. I could do it because for the first time I was shown and helped to do it rather than told to do it. She made me feel quite ashamed.

9. Has there been an effect on the school?

Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

10. How do you know?

• Feedback from my team and from the children and parents. • The fact that M moved me to this part of the school has had an impact and I know this from the work that I do with colleagues.	• I can see it in the children's work and in the progress that they are making. I know that teachers are actually doing a better job and we have changed so many things, such as planning and assessment. The strategic approach that M has used has meant that we no	• As the key stage co-ordinator, I carry out certain monitoring functions. I look at teacher's planning, assessment, meet with them in progress meetings plus the key stage meetings and the informal life of the school. There is a change that is just beginning	• Obviously, my monitoring role provides a range of data but I also think that it links to some thing that I said earlier. We are implementing this change and it is going well but I think that we are doing something much more fundamental and that is

	longer have good ideas and then for get them when the next one comes along. I know that you will say that its early days, but I actually believe that.	to permeate everything that we do. I can't identify it yet, but I know that it's there.	because how P has thought this through and led it but it also has something to do with X and her work as our critical friend. I need to think about this more.

11. There must have been some problems, what were they and how did you tackle them?

• We did have problems in getting the wording of the targets specific and child friendly and understandable to others. Everyone wanted banks of targets and that filled me with horror. We have overcome this through the progress meetings by talking together and sharing ideas.	• The paper work and recording system was a nightmare. The only way was to be decisive and quite brutal about what we didn't need and what we could throw away. We have now put a different system in place, ICT is helping and we are piloting it at the moment.	• Of course, we faced the problems that anyone faces with introducing something new. These were all connected to the administration and understanding what we were doing. Although it was a pain, they were actually easy to sort out. In the past I would have allowed these difficulties to have become my main preoccupation but now I know that it is my job to solve them so that colleagues can get on with the real job.	• Yes, we have had quite a few but there were easy to sort out because we talked them through together and didn't let them fester. The biggest problem that we are facing is that the teachers are expecting that X will continue in her present role and we will not be able to afford that. We have to think this one through carefully. X is the catalyst for the successful management and implementation of the action plan alongside P and I still don't know how to overcome it.

12. What would you like to happen next?

• We need to continue that focus on improving teaching in a variety of ways.	• There is no doubt about it. I think that we have to improve our methods for tracking individual children's progress. Not in order to develop individualised learning but to improve our understanding of the most effective ways in which we can meet children's needs.	• I actually don't know. I could give you a list of things, much like the staff did but that isn't important. I think that what we have to do next is more of the same. We need to keep working at improving teaching but how we can do this, still needs thinking through.	• I would like us to continue in a similar way and I am reflecting on this question at the moment. It is to do with how we organise and continue to develop and improve teaching and learning in the future.

13. What have you learned?

• Pupil target setting and its associated skills. I think I have also learned some management skills and have definitely developed new knowledge and understanding of teaching.	• I could write a long list but I think that the main thing that I've learned at this point, is to do with the management of people and the management of introducing something that really effects learning.	• I've developed as a teacher, a middle manager and as a member of the school team. I have also learned that the way that you support people in trying out something new is crucial. X has taught me how to ask questions of myself and others and has helped me to see that you think and talk about feeling and values before talking about practice.	• I am learning how to help people develop and improve as teachers. It will probably be the most important thing I will ever learn as a teacher.

APPENDIX 7

Summary of data from interviews with the headteachers

7.1 Summary of the key extracts from the semi-structured interviews with the headteachers during the planned improvements – schools 1 to 4;
7.2 Summary of the key extracts from the semi-structured interviews with the headteachers after the planned improvements – schools 1 to 4;
7.3 Summary of the responses from the semi-structured interview with the headteacher of school X – part 1;
7.4 Summary of the responses from the semi-structured interview with the headteacher of school Y – part 1;
7.5 Summary of the responses from the semi-structured interviews with the headteachers from schools X and Y – part 2.

Appendix 7.1: Summary of responses from the semi-structured interviews with the headteachers during the improvement process

1. What has happening during the term?

School 1: Headteacher	School 2: Headteacher	School 3: Headteacher	School 4: Headteacher
• You know that we have agreed the action plan and have implemented this. I am not going to talk about the detail of the implementation, because I know that you have lots of information from others on this. But what I am really pleased about, is how the staff have taken on this whole process of considering and implementing changes in their teaching. I think that this is a breakthrough for us, particularly in the light of the past.	• It hasn't been an easy term. Although we set out in a way that I had planned, it has all gone a little sour. Well, that's probably an understatement. Things are not good in the school and I believe that it is time that I relinquished my post as headteacher. I have lost the confidence of the parents and the staff. I intended to lead improvements in teaching and learning and have probably destroyed the school. You asked for honesty and truth and I am giving it to you, from my perspective. Change is a very difficult process when you don't manage it well.	• We have tried to develop greater consistency in our pedagogy through a range of activities. I think that we have been successful in many ways. This has been a deliberate process. The main thing that I have tried to do is to keep everyone informed, involved and on track. I am pleasantly surprised at the improvements that have happened in terms of teacher's attitudes and beliefs that have been translated into practice. The changes in the management structure were belt and braces but have been important, as I have said before. However, I think that we have had some impact.	• I almost feel as if I am tempting fate if I talk about what we have been doing. We have actually gone beyond what we hoped we would achieve. Yes, we have implemented a process of improvement in terms of improving teaching and learning, but S. and I were talking last night about the fact that we are beginning to own and feel as if we are controlling what is happening and that is a new feeling. You may think that I am being too optimistic, but it is how I feel at this point.

2. Have there been any effects on the teachers and if so, what are these effects?

• The teachers have responded well to the developments and have been positive. We have spent a lot of time talking about what we do and how we do it – which is new for us. We have looked at small things, such as how we plan, how we meet individual pupil needs, how we make judgements about progress and so on. I wanted to encourage teachers to think what they did, as I hoped that this would not be controversial and then I wanted them to think about how they did it.	• Initially, the changes seemed to have a positive effect but I made a major error of judgement in openly publishing the monitoring feedback reports. The effect has been destructive and I know that not only the teachers who teach English, but everyone is distraught. The effects have been negative, destructive and explosive. I think that I have made things worse.	• There have been dramatic effects. These have included the decisions that have been made about assessment and the collection and use of pupil performance data, the setting of pupil targets and the reviewing of these targets. I think that this is an impressive list and without doubt it is having an impact on teachers because it is making them think about what they do.	• Definitely. The action plan has been implemented and of course, it is having an impact on teachers and their teaching. But that is just part one of the story as far as I am concerned. The most important bit has been the growth of the staff thanks to X (external adviser). She has supported the teachers in improving the quality of teaching by mentoring, coaching, supporting, guiding and advising.

3. What have there been any effects on the quality of the teaching?

• After all of the early things of clarifying purpose and helping the teachers to think through their roles. We have moved into a process of questioning our normal practice. I have encouraged them to analyse their practice and to integrate	• The teachers actually seemed to have been de-skilled by all of this. There are still operating but it is in a very mechanical way. I now realise that the focus on teaching was inappropriate, as they weren't ready for it. Also, because I	• Teaching has improved. People are better planned and prepared, they are using assessment data more effectively. I have evidence of improved differentiation and just a general improvement in what is being taught and how	• The quality of teaching has improved in aspects of planning, preparation, methods, strategies, assessment and so on. That is brilliant but it is not the whole story. What X has achieved, with the support of the SMT,

the aspects that we learned during the INSET day. I now think that INSET isn't enough and that we need something else. But I don't know what this is yet. I have tried to resolve concerns and difficulties. Oh, I haven't answered your question.	felt that I was being threatened, I withdrew from the arena and left a vacuum.	it is being taught. • We have found that target setting at pupil level is a positive vehicle for improving pupil performance, however, I think that certain conditions apply before you can do this. You have to have positive attitude and understanding by the teachers on how they can set challenging but realistic targe5ts. Targets have to be based on sound evidence of what the pupil knows and can do, and this has dramatic connections to teacher knowledge, confidence and skills. Also the targets have to be specific and measurable, I would say that the other thing that we have achieved in the regular reviews of targets and the celebration of success buy children and teachers.	and myself has been the development of a new atmosphere. Colleagues are actively examining children's learning, their needs, their performance and progress and then thinking about how they can meet these needs. That's the break through for us.

4. Have there been any effects on the children and how do you know this?

• Yes, I believe so. I know it because of the monitoring data that has emerged and the range of activities and progress that I see happening. I think that because of the momentum that we have driven has ensured that there has been a constant focus on children and this has been crucial.	• There have been few visible effects on the children. The school has gone into "auto pilot", if I can call it that. However, it clearly has to be having a detrimental effect on the children. But I don't know what it is or how I know it, I just do.	• The parents have said that the targets are motivational. They also think that it has improved the quality of communications between school and home. I have also carried out my own survey of the children in key stage 2, the parents and the teachers.	• Undoubtedly so. The pupil progress data from this term has been interesting to monitor and evaluate. We are seeing improvements in progress but it is also to do with attitudes and processes, as well as outcomes.

5. What were the effects?

• There have been improvements in continuity and progression between year groups and between subject specialists within year groups. This means that there is an improved approach to what we do and how we do it. There is also something happening to expectations, which is harder to define and substantiate, but I know that it is happening. The consequence is that the children are getting a better	• Not an appropriate question	• I think that this was very motivational for the teachers. They received the information in disbelief as it is the first time that we have ever done anything like this. The parents liked what we were doing and said so. The children seem to like it and consequently, the staff were very positive. They found that the survey provided them with a concrete set of indicators for success. I think that is important for teachers. They need the feedback but	• X has helped the teachers to understand what they do and to question and analyse it, in terms of how teaching impacts on children. We have never done anything like this before. • I think that the development of using X in this way has been crucial. We have moved, far beyond our initial ideas and action plan, as I think that we are now into a process of improvement and have the foundations laid. • Teacher short term planning

deal than before.		they also need to have success indicators, in order to internalise the improvements and changes. This influences beliefs and attitudes, which influences principles and practices.	has improved with better differentiation of learning. The quality and accuracy of teacher assessments have improved. All of the teachers, to some extent or another, are using a wider range of teaching methods and forms of organisation of the children and t8ime. The targets that are being set and agreed with the children seem to be motivational and there is emerging evidence in improvement in on-task behaviour and children's progress. We obviously need to monitor this closely and for a longer period of time, but without doubt there is a very positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Best of all the staff believe that they are successful.

6. What has been the impact on you as the headteacher?

• Working with S and A has been good. Between us, we have led the whole process and tried to ensure that the teachers have been enabled and supported to do what was being asked of them. The impact has been mixed for me personally and professionally. I have derived great satisfaction from what has happened last term and this term. I can see improvements and I believe that we are developing a mechanism that we can re-use. It has been personally and professionally challenging because I have never interfered in teacher'' processes within the classroom before. I have found this difficult and challenging, as I said. Without X, our external adviser, it would have been difficult.	• Devastating, cruel and totally destructive. I am now ready to finish my job as headteacher of the school. You will know that I have met with the governors and if I can get the right package to protect myself financially and therefore my sons, I will be resigning. I have learned a great deal from this experience, but it is a bitter experience. I let the leadership of the school go and I allowed resistance to develop, and I find that difficult to deal with.	• Invigorating and exciting. I think that although we have been struggling with the implementation of a change in improving teaching, we have also been doing something else. We have also begun to understand the change process itself. Now, I don't think that we have mastered it but I do think that we have uncovered something that we could use again. I believe it was the survey, because teachers examined their actions and as a consequence of the feedback from pupils and parents, valued these actions. I'm, not sure why this is important, but I know that it is.	• It's been stunning. Of course, its hard work, but its even harder to fail. The effects haven't been that heavy.

7. What is going to happen next?

• If I said, I don't know, you would think that I was crazy, but I don't know. I am certain that we will implement what we set out to do however, I am still not certain about the impact on pedagogy. I am also still unsure about how I lead future improvements and developments. I am still thinking, reflecting and learning.	• I think I have no option but to resign but I need another post. In terms of the school, it now needs a firm and iron hand but in a velvet glove to rebuild relationships and to put the school back into a position that it can begin to rebuild. I would say to headteachers, do not consider attempting to improve teaching until the conditions are right. I didn't take that into account.	• We are going to look at baseline assessment and other aspects of assessment. Not because we like testing but because as effective teachers, we need a range of tools that support us in making judgements about learning and the process of teaching. We will repeat what we have learned generally and in principle from this process.	• You know that I think that we are onto something here. We have implemented change but I think that we are doing something that is much more long term. The first aspect of this is to do with the process of improving teaching. The second aspect is to do with setting up a culture of improvement per se. I want to embed these processes into the school.

8. What have you learned from this process?

• I have learned that you have to take people with you. We went through those early processes of talking about job descriptions and involving the staff in the decision making/action planning process. I would certainly repeat that type of process again. I've also learned that you have to develop the knowledge and skills of the staff to develop a sound	• Other than what I have just said, I also think that you have to develop teachers before improving teaching and learning. One day insets may be OK but they are not the answer. We actually needed professional and skilful support in the process that we undertook. I didn't take this into account.	• That's hard, as I don't know if I am ready to articulate it yet. As I said to you, I think that we are beginning to learn something about the improvement process. It needs lots of things or conditions in place before it happens successfully. This is the first time that we have attempted to examine pedagogy, perhaps that a clue. Also, it is the first time that we have considered	• I've learned that you cannot do it all yourself and yet the one day professional development event is not good. You need some one with the skills and expertise of X to help you in this process. I've also learned that you have to focus on teaching, in order to improve learning and finally, I've learned that you only challenge and question existing practice by

understanding of why, what and how. I also think that the questioning of existing practice is important and that a headtacher cannot do this alone, you have to involve others in supporting teachers through this process. I've also learned that I needed a and S to help me keep the momentum of the plan when we began to put our new practices into action. My main task now is to maintain and sustain that momentum. It is slowly becoming an accepted part of school life and teachers know for themselves that it works.		the effects beyond the teacher and that may be important.	developing the situation where people own and believe in change. But I don't know how I've done it – can you tell me.

Appendix 7.2: Summary of responses from the semi-structured interviews with the headteachers after the planned pedagogical improvement process

1. What have been the consequences of the planned change process on teaching and learning?

School 1: Headteacher	School 2: Headteacher (newly appointed/previously Senior master and Head of English)	School 3: Headteacher	School 4: Headteacher
• I believe now that there have been improvements, as I know that I was quite tentative when I spoke about this with you last term. I have evidence from the monitoring and evaluation process that the teachers are now planning more consistently and effectively. Also, this is happening coherently across the school. With better planning, there is also evidence of more appropriate teaching that consists of a wider range of methods and approaches. I think that we are beginning to improve the range and type of our instructional methods. • We are also more focused on teacher assessments and how we use this information to support differentiation. So I would say that there has been an impact on teaching there. • I think that because we have concentrated on the role of the subject leaders and focused on ensuring curriculum continuity and progression across and between subjects; initial, the subject co-ordinators are now beginning to look	• The whole thing was a fiasco. I have spent this term trying to smooth over the problems from last term. It has not always been easy with K as a member of staff, but she has been very professional and supportive. • There was an impact on teaching rather than learning. Teaching wise, the teachers were certainly more focused on what they were doing but because of the problems it all got rather lost in the difficulties, accusations and recriminations. But we have had a fresh chance to start again and so we are now looking at the curriculum, classroom organisation and management, resources and improving the quality of the learning environment. • Yes of course, this will have consequences for the children and their learning. But first of all I have to develop the right relationships and atmosphere in the school to take things forward.	• The benefits have been an improvement in what teachers plan to do and how they plan it, they use a wider range of teaching methods, including whole class teaching, group work and individual work. There is an improvement in differentiation, which means that teachers are thinking about what the children need to do next to improve and make progress. We are better at analysing pupil performance data and using our assessment information. • For the children, I think that they understand what they have to do next in order to improve and are more involved in their own learning. The other breakthrough is the feeling that parents say they have. They believe that they are beginning to feel like participants in the learning process, rather than just reacting to either what their children say and do or what their child's teachers say and do. I actually think that's quite important.	• I hope that the teachers are going to say similar things but the major difference to the past, is that the teaching behaviour of the staff has changed. By this, I mean that there is a different attitude to how we teach. There is a greater focus on children's learning and not on preparing for tests and exams. Of course, we are using pupil performance data – but in its widest sense to help us analyse and assess what each child needs next. This is very different to the past. • Also, one of the staff said at the beginning of term that she had realised that good teaching is actually the same as good learning. I wanted to shout Hallelujah! So this year we are thinking about how the children access information, develop ideas and ways of thinking and expressing themselves. I'm not talking about something isolated like study skills, but in every subject. • This means that when we thought that what we were doing last term wasn't having an effect on the curriculum, we were wrong. We

at strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and learning process – so we are still working on this and probably will do for some time. • The main consequence for the children has been a clearer link between their individual needs and the curriculum that we have delivering, rather than just delivering the curriculum efficiently and effectively.			now realise that this is having an effect on every subject, as each subject leader and team of teachers have to look again at what we are teaching. It's no good saying that we care about thinking, if the children follow a textbook and are never allowed or challenged to think.

2. What have been the consequences for the teachers?

• The positive consequences have been that we talk to each other more about the children's learning, rather than just their behaviour. The teachers are also more aware of what happens in the year below and above them and if they are specialist teachers, what is happening in other subjects that they don't teach. There is also a better understanding of how we intend to teach and the impact of what we actually do. That is a big move forward. • The downside is that this is more time consuming for the staff as they meet more regularly, plan together more frequently than in the past and also meet with the subject leaders. So it has definitely added to their workload. Having said that, I wouldn't want to go back to how it was. • I have to manage this, so I try to	• People have said things that they regret and others have not said things, which they now regret. It hasn't been easy for anyone having K as a normal teacher and the staff tiptoed around her for the first few weeks. It must have been really difficult for K and she must have had to bit her lip many times. • Some of the teachers now realise that they went over the top and as a consequence are fairly on-side but I will have to work hard to build the team again. • Teachers are beginning to meet together again to discuss the curriculum, planning and assessment. The action plan that K devised is going to be implemented this term but obviously we have learned from the mistakes of the past. • In a funny way the teachers have	• They are more involved and motivated, as they like getting the feedback from the children and parents. • The other important thing has been the use of the external adviser, as they like being told that they are successful. They also like this challenge of moving things forward without the feeling of "oh here we go again, something new." This isn't something new, but is constantly building on what we have done before……last week, last month, last term and so on. • The other thing is that they have started to use a wider range of teaching methods and approaches, so they want more professional development and support.	• Well it means that they no longer just present information or ideas, but are having to use a wide range of teaching methods and approaches which are planned to meet the needs of the children and to ensure that they can really meet the learning objective. We have become much more analytical about what we do and how we do it. • We have also started to develop the approach that X (external adviser) used with us last year. Now we have started doing demonstration lessons for each other and analysing them together. This means that we are examining our own practice together. We couldn't have done this before, as we didn't have a model to work to. All so, it would never have occurred to us, if I were truthful. • I think that they are happier and better motivated but also gaining a

provide time for meetings within school where it is possible for me to budget for it. I also try to provide time for the subject leaders to carry out their role. I also make sure that the information flow doesn't stop at the subject leaders but is really two way.	learned a great deal from all of it and we began the new academic year by putting our cards on the table and talking openly and honestly. It was painful for some people but it was important. So I think that we have all grown up a bit and maybe entered a real world rather than a fantasy world.		lot of job satisfaction.

3. What are the consequences for you?

• It has added to my workload as well as that of the teachers but I'm not worried about that. What it has done, is increase my knowledge and understanding of what is happening in classrooms in terms of teaching and learning. It has also helped me to see where our weaknesses are and these are no longer hunches. • I've also developed a stronger senior management team, who are more involved in the leadership of the school. • The other breakthrough occurred to me, when I was driving home after talking to you last time. You know, I had never really had an impact on teaching before and that is what has happened this time. I now know that this is where improvement lies – in effecting classrooms. So the impact on me has been enormous, as I now know where I have to move to next.	• I have to be tactful and sensitive and you know that this isn't my strength. I have had to accept that they cannot run before they have experienced walking – which is frustrating. • I also don't trust them, as they could turn on me, so I find myself on one hand, quite guarded with what I say to people and on the other hand, I try to ensure that I consult and talk with the teachers as much as possible. • I need to develop a new management structure in the school to help me, or I will end up like K. You see I have learned many lessons and don't wish to repeat them.	• In a funny way, my job is easier than before but I am busier. We certainly have more meetings, talk together more, have a bigger professional development programme and I find that people demand more feedback at all sorts of levels. This makes the job more challenging but it's a whole lot better than sorting out the..... (expletive) that I used to have to deal with.	• The main consequence is managing the school so that this can continue. The management structure of the school is completely focused on enhancing children" learning. In order to do this, we have put and will continue to put extensive financial and time resources into teacher professional development. This means whole school workshops, individuals attending training opportunities, but also is focused on embedding the teacher" new learning into their own practice. • It is expensive and one of my biggest jobs is persuading the governors that it is an investment and not a waste of money. I think that they are convinced – but it is hard work. • The other change, has been the fact that the strategic plan and the SDP has been completely re-written, as we realised that the plan wasn't really helping us. Now the whole

			thrust of the plan is to enhance learning.
4. What are the consequences for the way the school is managed?			
• We now have a management structure, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. We meet together to talk and take decisions, although I find this as bit cumbersome some times. I think that the school is better managed than in the past, as it isn't reliant on me.	• As I have just said, we need a new management structure and we will use the action plan as a way of slowly rebuilding one. I also think that I am more democratic than K and so talk with the staff a lot, and this means a lot more meetings.	• Massive consequences think that the staff are more accepting of the differences between them, but there is a feeling of self-wroth that wasn't there before. I also think that they share more and offer each other mutual support that didn't happen in the past. There is also more co-operation and participation.	• I've already talked about the governors, staff development, and the development planning process but the other change has been in the way that roles and responsibilities are delegated. • The other thing is that although we have a mission statement and it sounds wonderful, I don't think that it really encapsulates what we are doing now. So, this needs to be thought through again. • The final thing is the way we now use monitoring data during the term rather than evaluation data at the end of the term. This keeps us focused on how we are doing.
5. What have you learned?			
• I've learned that you have to create the conditions for managing change and these changes have to focus on improving teaching and learning. • I also know that although we can do a lot for ourselves, we also need help from outside the school. This is the area that I think we have to develop next. Teacher INSET workshops are great but they are not enough. We have to find a way of sharing our good practice or addressing our weak practice that goes beyond the subject leaders.	• You can't do it alone, I need to be sensitive and take people with me. I need help. That's the biggest thing I've learned but I am still working out where I can get the help from. • As well as involving the staff, I also have to involve the parents, children and governors in what is happening, in order to overcome this feeling of secrecy that existed before	• You have to get the conditions right first of all and you have to develop the teacher's knowledge and understanding of teaching and teaching processes. • The parents, children and teachers have to be involved. • Teachers can put aside personality differences to focus on the task and operate on the understanding of the interests of the children. • You don't need to keep starting from the beginning – as you need to build on the successes of what has gone	• Well all of the things that we talked about last term plus, my job and that of the other senior managers is not just to create the conditions, which is what I was doing in the past but all so to develop the range and breadth of the teaching skills and methods. • You have to have the parents and children actively involved in the process and you need the governors with you all the way. They have to understand what is happening. • Teachers need to be committed and

		before. • You've got to keep the focus on teaching and learning by further building the knowledge and skills of the staff. • You have to set up support mechanisms that work, in a variety of ways.	you only get this through their involvement and ownership. • I am no longer frightened of change and I think that we are using the change process quite successfully. Everyone is focused on the immediate innovation that we are involved in and that is right. But the SMT and I are now constantly thinking ahead and also about how we can improve what is happening now. In a funny sort of way, this sustains the immediate thing that we are working on.

Appendix 7.3 Summary of responses from the semi-structured interview with headteacher of school X

1. What was the objective of the pedagogic improvement?
The objective was to improve the quality, range and type of teaching methods that were being used throughout the school. Our problem was that many of the teachers at both key stages had become reliant on text books and work sheets – there was a lot of content being covered, but the quality of teaching and learning was poor. The children were doing OK in SATs and local examinations and our results in Common Entrance were fine – but I and the rest of the SMT felt that the potential was better than the actual results. The teaching felt tired, mundane, boring and low quality. Therefore, out objective was to improve this.

2. How was this planned?.
The SMT and I met together over three years ago to plan what we would do as there are no quick fixes, a lot of things had to be put into place first – if you like we had to enable the staff to make these improvements, but at that time, there were many things that were wrong in the school that needed addressing. So, together, we put a basic plan into action, which was explained, to the staff. I have to say that I wasn't democratic and didn't ask them what they wanted – I told them what was needed based on an audit of the quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement.

3. Who was involved in the planning?
As I have said, it was basically the SMT and myself. However, right at the beginning, even before I took up the post, I asked A. to come and work in the school to help us. First of all, she undertook an audit of the needs by spending time in every classroom, looking at teacher's planning and children's work, talking with staff, parents and children. Then she talked with the whole staff about how findings – the good and the areas for improvement and she suggested several areas to consider. The staff and I talked this through and then I devised the action plan with the SMT.

4. Who led the improvement plan during implementation?
I think that I did, but the rest of the SMT and the subject leaders were involved at all levels.

5. Who was involved in the implementation?
Everyone – teachers, classroom assistants, nursery nurses – everyone.

6. Can you describe the process?
Well, after the audit and A.'s meeting with the staff, she then started coming into school. First of all she worked with pre KS1 and KS1: She discussed short term planning with the whole team and then with individuals, she observed lessons and gave individual confidential feedback –agreeing objectives for improving practice that the teacher's would then try out before her next visit. She helped them to make changes in the learning environment and with classroom organisation and management. At the end of each day, she both organised and led whole staff training or key stage specific training. This training focused on curriculum documentation, improving planning, improving teacher assessment, setting up target setting for pupils, classroom management and organisation, improving the quality of the learning environment, behaviour management and dealing with special needs and the very able.

She then repeated the same process with key stage 2.

After two terms we had:

- Introduced a whole school approach to planning and assessment;
- Re-organised classrooms, refurbished them and improved the quality of the learning environment;
- Set up basic curriculum organisation – such as policies, schemes of work and long term planning to ensure curriculum continuity and progression;
- Appointed subject leaders and agreed roles and responsibilities;
- Introduced monitoring and evaluation by the subject leaders from nursery to year 6 and provided time for them to do this;
- Instituted weekly staff meetings and a full programme of professional development.

The secret was the programme of staff development, because without improving their knowledge and skills, I could splash all the paint around – but it wouldn't have attracted the new parents – you can only sell a school when the teaching looks good, feels good and is good.

After the first two terms of general workshops and A. working along side teachers, we then agreed that she would work with very specific people during the second year – supporting them in developing and applying this new knowledge. So she, returned to working with teachers – but not at the extensive level of the first year, this was very focused and was designed to meet the very specific needs of teachers. They were involved in the discussion and diagnosis of needs with A. There were no written or verbal reports to me – her job was to help the teachers.

7/8. The plan was monitored and evaluated and who by?
Yes – By subject leaders and the SMT

9. What happened to information from M & E?
SMT and I discussed it and the general feedback was shared by the staff monthly – so that they were kept up to date.

10 Has there been an impact?
Yes

11. What was the impact on the children?
It is now unlikely that you would see a child looking bored, day dreaming or trying to get out of lessons. The children are more motivated and involved in their learning. They are also more independent and less reliant on their teachers from the nursery upwards. The other big thing for the children, is the information that they are given about their progress and the surgery meetings that year 4 to 6 have with their tutors, who help them to plan what needs to happen next.

12a. What has been the impact on the standards/quality of teaching?
Well, we now have a systematic approach to planning, classroom organisation and management and assessment – which may not sound much – but it is a huge thing. More importantly, there is an understanding about what we are doing and why we are doing it. A. spent a lot of time working with the whole staff and individuals to help them think and talk about what they think is important. This early talking was crucial as it underpins the expectations of the staff for the children.
I would say, and can back this up with evidence, that you would rarely see textbooks and work sheets being used. Children are encouraged to think more and be involved in their learning. Children actually talk now, rather than sitting passively listening to the children. The other big difference is the emphasis on children accessing information in a variety of ways and developing thinking skills in all subjects. Our inspection this year showed that the percentage of very good to excellent teaching went up from 48% (at the time of the last inspection – 6 years ago) to 72% and this involves more teachers than before. We also got 100% satisfactory to good teaching with no poor at all.

12b What has been the impact on the standards/quality of learning?
The impact on learning is interesting. Our measurable results – SATs, Common Entrance, 11+ and all of the other exams, have shown remarkable improvements. We are all – parents, governors and staff delighted and we have gained scholarships to a number of senior schools. But the most exciting thing for me, is the improvement in children's attitudes to their learning, their involvement and excitement and the breadth of things that they do now. Look at how confident they are and the quality of what they are doing – it is good. We are non-selective, mixed ability and are achieving well above the national standards – which wasn't happening three years ago.

13 What has been the impact o n teachers?
They work harder without doubt and seem to enjoy their work more. That cynical back biting that always happened coupled with the terrible moaning has almost gone. This was because I got rid of certain people. They all have clear and agreed job descriptions, appraisal has been introduced and they are involved in the decision making. I keep them informed of everything and we celebrate every little thing that happens in the school. They have just helped to produce the strategic plan for the next five years and have a copy each. They have taken on the extra curricular activities and with the increase in

numbers, I have been able to reward them financially. The influx of the newly qualified teachers has been great, as they have brought new attitudes and approaches. It is more fun all together.
I think that the main thing has been the professional development programme, without that we would not have made the transition to where we are now.

14. What has been the impact on you?
I have worked myself into the ground and for 18 months hardly saw my family but it has been worth it. I feel that we now have a school that is not just financially viable but also a good school. I have learned a lot from doing it and I know that I have made mistakes so I am more careful in what I say to teachers and how I say it.
We have an unfair dismissal case, which was horrible, but the governors held strong and supported my decisions. I am still a bit of a terror in that I like things done quickly and won't stand any rubbish – if people are paid well, they should do a good job. But I have still got my sense of humour and the interests of the children at heart.

15. What has been the impact on the school?
- School financially stable;
- Teachers have contracts, job descriptions and regular appraisal;
- The school has a strategic and development plan;
- The curriculum is organised to ensure continuity and progression;
- Number are increasing with a new brochure, parent/school contracts and a waiting list for the future;
- New building have gone up and the whole place has been refurbished;
- There is a different atmosphere, climate and involvement of governors, staff and parents;
- There is a school council for the older children and they also have responsibilities within the school;
- Planning, assessment and record keeping are now consistently carried out across the school with post holders taking responsibility for budgets monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and learning across the whole school;
- Standards of teaching, learning and pupil achievement have improved dramatically.

16 What are the consequences of the pedagogical change?
We have moved beyond just surviving, we are now an effective school. Without focusing on improving teaching, we would have closed. It is the secret of being a strong and effective school – it is our core enterprise and what we're here for.

17 What is going to happen next?
We have already started by look at the teaching of Literacy right across the school. We are looking at writing, spelling and speaking and listening. Now that we have improved methods of teaching it is time to examine how we can adjust our curriculum appropriately.

18. What have you learned?
I was always a strong person with a vision of what I wanted but I've learned that you have to take people with you. Secondly, without clearing out some of the difficult people who were not effective teachers, I would not have been able to have led these improvements. So, it is important that as a head you enable teachers to do the job that you are asking and expecting them to do. Finally, we could not have done this without A. She was the one who had the knowledge and skills to work with teachers at an individual, team and whole school level. She has been able to nurture the knowledge, skills and confidence of the staff. The other big thing is the agreeing of what we think is important and discussing our expectations of the children – quite crucial that.

Appendix 7.4: Summary of response from the semi –structured interview with headteacher of school Y

1. What was the objective of the pedagogic change?

We have always have had a good reputation as being an effective school. Many of our pupil's parents were pupils here themselves and so the objective was not to improve numbers. As you know, many or most of the staff have been here a long time. They are all good teachers, as we don't have anyone who is failing. On the other hand, we all trained a long time ago and although we keep up with the latest training and new initiatives, it seemed a bit adhoc. We know that we will be inspected next year, and so two and half years ago, we began to think about our strengths and weaknesses. We all agreed that perhaps we needed to look at our basic skills as teachers and refresh ourselves.

So, that was the objective – to refresh our teaching approaches and to ensure that we were being effective.

2. How was this planned?

I planned it with the help of my deputy and the director of studies. We then talked to the staff and agreed that we needed some coherent professional development. It is expensive to send people out on courses and we have found that the school sees little pay back from this approach, although I accept that teachers generally enjoy it. But it's not cost effective.

3. Who was involved in the planning?

Myself, the SMT and then B. who joined us for two days twice a term to get to know us. She is an excellent trainer and became our critical friend. She has credibility with the staff and they trust her although were nervous about her being in their classrooms, as nobody has observed anybody ever. After she had got to know everyone and had been in everyone's classroom and discussed their teaching with them, the whole staff met together. She gave an honest and quite hard-hitting presentation on what she had found. Actually, none of it was a surprise to anyone but it is quite hard for someone to present it to you like that. We all accepted that she was right and that we had known about the points that she raised. As an outcome, certain objectives were agreed then she and I put an action plan together. This was given to the staff at a later date, when she wasn't there, so that they could moan about her if they needed to. One or two did, but it was a little half hearted and then we agreed the plan. Only one member of staff had misgivings.

4. Who led the improvement plan during the implementation?

The director of studies.

5. Who was involved in the implementation?

All teaching staff.

6. Can you describe the process?

We began with a series of workshops on planning, differentiation, teacher assessment, classroom management and teaching and learning styles and methods. These were either one day or twilight workshop over three terms. In the meantime, B. made her visits to the school each half term (two days per half term) where she spent time in classrooms. She focused on English and maths teaching during that first year. She would observe a lesson then meet with the teacher and discuss what had happened. Sometimes, she would demonstrate a lesson beginning or ending or something like that. What was said between her and the teacher was confidential. But it was always agreed that she would agree an objective for improvement for her next visit and she would then observe this and give feedback.

During the second year, she moved into science, ICT, history, geography, French and DT. – carrying out the same process.

She has written general reports or me, which I show to no one else and has reported to the governors twice – but only in general terms of what is happening and so on.

7./8. The plan was monitored and evaluated by whom?

Director of studies and heads of department.

9. What happened to information from M & E?

Always discussed with SMT and a written report provided. General feedback to the whole staff.

10. has there been an impact?
Yes.

11 What was the impact on the children?
The children were already highly motivated and doing well in all aspects of the curriculum. I think the biggest impact on them is that they are asked to do less writing and less preparation for test and involved in more practical and investigative work than before. Also they do more paired and small group collaborative work whilst in the past they would have worked individually and independently all the time. They still have to do that of course, but there is more of a balance.

12a. What has been the impact on the standards/quality of teaching?
The teaching is different, in that the teachers now use a wider range of methods. There is more group, paired, practical and investigative work. Rooms are organised differently. We buy less worksheets and the tasks are usually differentiated to met groups and individual needs. I would say that every lesson has a beginning, middle and plenary. The standards of teaching has improved, although it wasn't bad before. I think that teachers are more aware of the children's needs and we are certainly challenging the more able students in a way that didn't happen before,

12b What has been the impact on the standards/quality of learning?
Prep is now linked into the lesson and is part of the planning. Children have clear targets and receive regular feedback and suggestions for improvement. The children were very independent but now they have been given responsibility, which is different. Standards have improved – bot dramatically as they were already good, but they have improved. Interestedly, the children, especially the boys, seem to be more motivated and involved than before. We were well above national standards and we are maintaining that without teachers working harder.

13. What has been the impact on teachers?
I think that they are enjoying it more and they certainly like the fact that in some ways they don't work as hard as before. I think that is because we were working in isolation from each other, you know each of us doing our own thing. We meet more often which is not always easy to arrange in a busy school like this, but we probably do less preparation and less marking, but are more actively involved during the teaching. One thing that characterised this school is the past was passivity, which has now gone. There is more energy and enjoyment. The other big break through has been the improvement in teacher's ICT skills. B. insisted that they start to plan, record, etc, by using laptops. We use laptops and white boards in the lessons and this has lifted the teaching onto a new level.

14. What has been the impact on you?
Other than fighting for the money to do all of this at the beginning, surprisingly there has been little impact in terms of workload. I think that we now work more effectively. Heads of department now get into peoples classrooms, but they are given time to do it. My job has been to manage the whole thing.

15 what has been the impact on the whole school?
- Better use of ICT in teaching and as a teaching tool;
- Teachers using a wider range of teaching methods and greater involvement of pupils in practical/investigative tasks;
- More talking by pupils and less work sheets;
- Parents like it – as the children go home animated;
- Greater focus on thinking, communication and information skills than in the past;
- Standards of children's achievement have increased slightly;
- Staff greater involved in each other's work and taking responsibility for different aspects of curriculum and school life.

16. What are the consequences of pedagogical change?
We were a good school and we are probably even better than before. Without doubt, the staff are more motivated and the children are achieving more in all aspects of the curriculum. It has supported and persuaded the governors to develop a strategic plan, where learning is the focus of all aspects of the plan. We have introduced appraisal and are now thinking about our programme for continuous professional development.

17. What is going to happen next?

We don't need B. in the same way as before, as we have moved beyond that type of support. What we need next is more movement between teachers in the school and probably more monitoring by people other than heads of department. We are moving into a period of looking at how we can accelerate children's learning by our grouping and setting of children- but in imaginative ways and also how we use time – this will have huge problems for the timetable.

18

What have you learned?

That you are never to old to learn. I felt like a successful headteacher and suddenly realised that we had all become just a little complacent with our lot. Now everything is buzzing, what with the IT and new teaching methods and the other things that are happening. So the first thing, we are all learners, secondly that we needed help from both inside and outside the school – the old approach to INSET is no good. It has to be made part and parcel of the school" life, traditions and values. And lastly, that you have to take the staff with you and the only way to do this is to be a bit more strategic, so that they know what is coming and why. Then they can accept the change. Change in a traditional school like this was difficult to approach but once we got it set up right, then each step followed on logically. It's to do with people, people, people.

Appendix 7.5: Part two of the semi-structured interviews with headteachers of Schools X and Y

You have described the changes that have happened to your school over the last few years, I would now like to discuss these issues at a deeper level.

Question	School X: Headteacher	School Y: Headteacher
1.You described the pedagogical change that your school has undertaken over the last few years, I would now like to focus on how this happened. **What were the stages that you think your school has moved through?**	• First of all, it was to do with recognising that we needed to make dramatic changes in order for the school to survive financially – because of falling roles. • Secondly, the audit that we carried out showed that we needed to improve the quality and standards of teaching and learning. If you like, we recognised that we had a problem. • Thirdly, we then set about deciding how to resolve that problem. That was only going to be solved by improving teaching and learning. • The final stage was then finding the best way to do this and that was by improving the teacher's knowledge and skills of how to teach effectively. Once we had recognised this, we found the right external person to help us as we couldn't do it for ourselves. We then devised our plan to achieve our objectives and financed it.	• We could have carried on in the same old way but it was all a bit repetitive, also we knew that Inspection was coming and we all knew that things were not absolutely right. Although equally things weren't bad either. • We then decided on what had to be done and the best way to do it. My deputy and I agreed that we needed outside help and we sought the advice of IAPS. They suggested B. as a good person and we contacted her. • She has worked with us to re – develop the skills and knowledge of the staff and to implement a clear programme of improvement.
2. So, the first stage was the recognition of your problem and then deciding on appropriate action.	Yes	Yes
3. I am interested in the fact that you decided that although physical facilities within the school had to be improved and updated that **you focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Why did you decide on this approach?**	• For us, it was survival. You cannot sell a school to parents, if the teaching is poor and the pupil outcomes are poor. And that was our situation. It was obvious that we had to improve the facilities but even more obvious that we had to improve the quality of teaching and learning. I had to sort out the weak and failing teachers and I had to enable the OK or good teachers to improve their practice.	• We could have just focused on the new buildings, but with a stable and long time serving staff it was clear that we needed to consider their needs. The only way that we could develop and continue to maintain the high standards that we were already achieving was through improving the teaching.

4. The outcomes that you have described are impressive but I would like you to be a little more reflective about what has happened in your school. **What do you think has actually happened beyond an improvement in the quality of teaching and learning?**	• We are now a viable school with increasing numbers, which is an achievement. But I think that we have also changed in areas that are harder to quantify. I think that the staff are no longer concerned about change, as they accept it as normal. Perhaps we are noew managing change because of what happened. Change is normal at XXXXXX.	• You know our history and things didn't change here in the past. The biggest aspect or most important thing has been the way that most of the staff, excluding H., have embraced the new approaches to teaching. This is a big step forward to us. We still maintain our traditional approach to all sorts of things, but the way that the school now works is quite different.
5. Please explain further	• We are continuing to undertake all sorts of improvements and that is good. The focus continues to be on improving teaching and learning. But I no longer have to sell it to the staff and in fact, many of the ideas now come from them.	• The school was always very hierarchical and I was expected to make the decisions. Now, the heads of department and members of the SMT are involved in the decision making process and more importantly in suggesting where we go next. Also, the teachers are more involved in the management and decision making process.
6. Why do you think this has happened?	• The success of the first changes to teaching became infectious. We all wanted to repeated it. Secondly, I think that by improving the staff, in terms of who was employed, their conditions of work, the expectations and the staff development programme – ensured that this would continue.	• It is to do with the staff development programme. By improving the staff's knowledge and confidence, this led to an increased involvement in what was happening across the school. • Communications and expectations have changed and this has meant that the teachers feel more personal commitment to the school.
Explain my theory, then: 7. In the light of what I have just said, does this sound familiar or do you think that this is not what has happened in your school?	• It sounds very familiar. We needed to improve the standards of teaching in order to improve learning, in order to survive. The only way that we could do it, in our desperate circumstances was with the help of external support. A. provided that support and was able to work on the two levels that you have described – building the staff's knowledge and skills and then working alongside them in the classroom. • I know that this has not only developed the individuals, but has also developed the subject and key stage teams and therefore, the whole school team.	• I didn't know that there was a theory for it, but what you are saying describes what happened here. It was through the staff development programme at workshop level and then in classrooms that I began to see a change in teacher's attitudes as well as skills. We have also developed as a school. It was rare to talk about teaching before, we talked about dates, sports day, and organisational issues. We still talk about those but we also talk about children's learning and how we can improve it.

8. Would you say that you are on the second curve or the first curve of change?	• We are definitely on the second curve, because we made the pedagogical improvement that we originally planned. However, we didn't then go back to square one and say what's next? Instead we built on that development and continued the moves forward. The school has been strengthened, but I think that we work more strategically than before.	I am not sure, but my gut reaction is that we are on the second curve, as you describe it. We are continuing to improve but we do feel fully in control of what we are doing. Perhaps this is because we didn't set out to do this, but it sort of happened. However, for the SMT and the governors, we now recognise that we can continue to improve whilst retaining what is seen as unique to XXX school.
9. What was the key element or were the key aspects to this process?	• It was ensuring that we had the staff to do the job in the first place. Then it was about deciding on our priorities, then getting the help to do something about it. I think that by keeping the improvement plan focused on teaching, it was difficult for the teachers to fight against it. It was also having the will to see it through and not stop after the first signs of improvement. • I also think it was connected to improving relationships and keeping everyone informed about our successes and the things that weren't working so well. • It is also important to develop the middle managers and ensure that they are fully involved in the management of the school – that was quite crucial and was probably part of moving into the second curve. • I also think, and you will find that everyone will agree, the most important thing, was the development of the confidence and skills of the staff to actually implement what they learned in the workshops. Without A.'s assistance in classrooms, this wouldn't have happened. I think we are now learning how to do this for ourselves, but we would always keep that type of relationship with outside support and advisers in the future. • Independent schools have always been isolated from each other and did not have the support mechanisms that state schools have had or could buy into, in the past. That has changed, with the support that IAPS offers and with the range of skills and talents that are now available for a school to buy in. That is the major difference. It is that which has meant that we can now not only manage improvements within the curriculum and pedagogy but also in the way that the school is managed and directed.	• Deciding that we needed to improve was the first point and then finding B. who could help us. I think the key was linking staff development to improvement to teaching and learning rather than just improving the curriculum. • We are now managing the school more effectively and feel in greater control of our future. • The final point that I would like to make is that by improving an aspect of the life of the school, my deputy and I have agreed that we are in greater control, as I have just said. This is because we think that teaching is what we are about – it is our core task. By improving our main enterprise, we have improved the school and are in a different position to the past, which was about maintenance. We now feel that by putting the focus on improving teaching, we are actually improving the school. If as you have just described, this means managing change, then perhaps that is what we are doing. I don't know, I will have to think about that. I do know however, that if good schools, like ourselves, want to improve, you have to focus on teaching, Without that you cannot improve learning. • Teachers would have always said that they were working together before, but now I think they wouldn't just say it but are doing it. That is the big difference to that past coupled with this absolute focus on learning.

APPENDIX 8

Examples from the field notes (Journal)

8.1 Example 1 contains notes that were written during an interview, they also include quotes from the interview transcript (the interview had been transcribed that evening) and reflections written after transcribing the tape;

8.2 Example 2 contains notes and reflections written during and after the observation of three teachers working with their external adviser;

8.3 Example 3 contains notes and reflections written during and after a classroom observation.

Appendix 8: Examples from Field Notes

The following field notes are taken from the field journal.

1. *Example 1 contains notes that were written during an interview, they also include quotes from the interview transcript (the interview had been transcribed that evening) and reflections written after transcribing the tape.*

2. *Example 2 contains notes and reflections written during and after the observation of three teachers working with their external adviser.*

3. *Example 3 contains notes and reflections written during and after a classroom observation*

Example 1 – School 4

14 April 2001

Purpose of observation and visit

To interview Head of English about pupil progress and achievement and other factors affecting the teaching and learning of Literacy. She has carried out a survey of children in group 6 (10-11 year olds) and teachers about attitudes and issues arising from the additional support that has been put into classrooms during literacy lessons. Support teacher and classroom assistant move around classrooms, to give additional help.

The other purpose of the visit to the school is to talk with the teachers and to observe generally.

Notes

On arrival this morning, walked the school with P. Spent a minimum of 30 minutes in each classroom and a brief period with French and music teachers and SENCO – just seeing everyone after a 3 week absence.

General observations

Pre-prep has different wall displays and has been tidied up and better organised. All drawers and cupboards now labelled. Staff friendly and willing to talk about the last three weeks. People smiled a lot and seem to be relaxed.

Interview with Head of English

This interview was tape recorded, using interview schedule (Schedule 3) and transcribed by me.

- Below are the key issues that were noted in the interview. They are key issues for the respondent as these are issues that are being discussed by teachers and what they are thinking about at this time:

1. *The provision of extra with literacy skills*
2. *The difficulties that their classroom needs pose for the teacher*
3. *Parental attitudes*
4. *The link between the levels of difficulty of tasks and likely progress*
5. *Successful learning styles*
6. *A successful learning environment*
7. *The link between volume/frequency of reading and reading progress*
8. *The selection of reading material*

Notes now expanded to include extracts from the interview transcript:

1. *The provision of extra help with literacy skills*
   "Pupils are aware of their own inadequacies, and peer reactions often confirm these"

"Teachers are concerned that on one hand pupils are aware of their own inadequacies, and peer reactions often confirm these, on the other hand the receipt of extra help, means to alleviate the difficult, and may itself reinforce the labelling process."

"There can be a lack of mutual involvement in the pupils' support programme, misunderstandings about the role of the support teacher or classroom assistant and this is common. On the other hand, contact time with the staff, away from the children, is difficult to organise and is dependent on teacher's priorities. A specialist teacher has the interest and motivation to keep abreast of developments in her field, and can be a useful resource; on the other hand their specialism may limit their career prospects, and lead them to lose relevance in the wider school context."

2. *The difficulties that their classroom needs pose for teachers*
"On the one hand pupils are aware they need a lot of the teacher's time to help them, but on the other they also feel that the rest of the class should have a fair proportion of the teacher's time."

"The children are aware that they need a lot of the teacher's time to help them"

"If a planned approach to meet a pupil's special needs in literacy is to succeed, co-operation is essential. But this implies a common philosophy on effective strategies, which may be difficult to establish or only achievable over time."

"Flexibility in working situations means you can meet the pupils' and teachers' needs more sensitively, but the use of bulky resources such as IT can render constant moving of working situations less effective in terms of learning."

3. *Parental attitudes*
"Children know their parents want them to progress at a normal rate, and that their school experiences should make this possible however the some children feel that their parents do not want them singled out for extra help."

"Many parents think teaching reading is a much specialised thing and the involvement if a support teacher confirms this. However, providing parents with the opportunity to make a positive contribution can relieve anxiety in both parents and pupils"

"There is a need or duty to keep parents informed and involved in the school's efforts to help the child, whether they are experiencing difficulties or not. We find that in a school like this there is tremendous pressure on the children and teachers for the child to succeed no matter what. Parents do not want to be told that their child is having difficulties – they are paying and therefore, somehow and simplistically expect us to solve any learning problems."

4. *The link between the level of difficulty of the tasks and likely progress*
"They have an awareness of what good reading is and that good readers read a lot".

"Pupils have an awareness that the literacy support programme is designed to help them yet they are undecided as to whether being present with "hard work or easy work" is the best route to progress"

"One of the children that I interviewed said, "I get the feeling sometimes that I can do better. Like, some of the fourth years: they've got big books they can read lots of chapters out of it. I feel a bit left out, a bit jealous."

"There is a need for honesty between the teacher and child in identifying areas for improvement or of difficulty. We have to balance this by instilling a level of confidence in the learner."

"Grouping children is a key issue at the moment and we are really discussing it. This is linked to differentiation and how effectively we do that. On the one hand some children's needs are best

met by working within their own class group and interest level and this may be simpler to organise. But on the other hand some pupils may have common strengths or weaknesses across the age/class bands and economies of scale in terms of time and effort may be made by grouping according to need and/or ability."

5. Successful learning styles
"Pupils feel that if they are interested they can learn easily on their own however, with some tasks that they find difficult, they need speedy access to help."

6. A successful learning environment
Easier to concentrate if the atmosphere is quiet but some kinds of work demand noise – i.e. note making or discussion in groups.

I think you have to look at the school's organisation, the children that you are working with, and the practicalities……..I have just moved to an area in the school, rather than have a little room. I've moved to that area which we have made, and actually the children don't seem to be as distracted as I had thought that they may have been. The work of the external adviser has really made me and probably all of us focus on this."

7. The link between volume/frequency of reading and reading progress
"They have awareness that "good readers" read a lot but they get frustrated that they can not read and are pressured to do so."

8. The selection of reading material
Children with reading difficulties are likely to choose picture books or easier books but they want to be seen by their peers as reading "hard" books.

Additional issue:
Record keeping
"On the one hand records are valuable to all persons concerned with the child during her school life."

"So I think you have to improve the record keeping system which is very easy to use, very easy to read and I think the most important aspect of record keeping is what the teachers know about that child in her mind. So I think the talk, the way things start over a cup of coffee is not the way to proceed."

Brief discussion with the SENCO (who is also the Assessment coordinator) in the staff room, where I asked "whether and if so, record keeping needed to be improved?"

"I think record keeping is very important, but I do think it can become a god, and then teachers spend most of their non-teaching time filling in record sheets and writing copious notes. When you think of the normal busy day, a teacher has how many times do they pick up the child's record sheet and rarely thoroughly read it."

"I want to improve our records but I am worried about having too much paperwork around"

Notes now further expanded to include my observations.

Individualisation appears to be a central theme in the discussions that are taking place amongst the teachers, in order to identify and meet the children's needs in literacy. Teacher cooperation appears to be seen as operating at either the planning or the operational level, or both. Where the implementation involves the extraction of children, it may be pertinent to ask how missing out on those amounts of class activities might affect the progress of average children.

It seems from today that there is a general feeling that record keeping should be improved, but in what form, and for what purpose, and for whose use, seems to be very unclear. Where two or more

teachers are involved in an exchange of information or direct teaching, there is the recognition of the need to plan, coordinate and constantly exchange information about progress.

Still evidence of staff's suspicion of too formal record keeping, which they feel is seldom maintained, read, or noted thoroughly, amongst the day-to-day pressures of classroom life; so they tend to rely on informal verbal interaction for communication.

Change involving teachers' responsibilities is not as problematic as last term. Comments from the teachers and P show a readiness to change at all levels, providing people feel that their experience – gained under previous headteacher – is not devalued in order to demonstrate the need for change.

The outcomes of the work of the external adviser is now observable in terms of improved classroom organisation and management, the consistency and depth of the medium and short term planning and the increasing range and type of teaching methods.

Personal response to the issues raised:

- There appear to be general levels of increasing awareness of individual needs of children;
- The professional development programme and the work of the external adviser are popular and staff are very positive.
- The meetings between the subject coordinators and the change in the timetable for meetings and communication (see notes on December 3) appear to working.
- The review of the financial cost centres and staff remuneration appears to have made teachers more aware of their value and responsibilities.

Next visit: difficulties between team members wanting to develop their roles, their own feelings about their ability to do this, and the perceptions of the children and class teachers about the possibility or need for this.

Example 2 – School 3

June 24 2002 (09.00 – 15.30 in one of the teacher's classroom)

The following notes are taken from the field journal:

Professional development observation – session led by external adviser with year 4, 5 and 6 teachers, on developing appraisal system:

The aims were clearly established:

- preparation of the teachers for the introduction of professional self-appraisal;
- teacher awareness of individual pupil needs;
- creating a suitable classroom climate for asking questions.

External adviser's objective:

By the conclusion of the day and the completion of each teacher's portfolio, the expectation is that each teacher should be able essentially to replace common sense with systematic thinking, replace anecdotal knowledge with generalisable knowledge, and replace generalised knowledge with detailed knowledge.

Training methods

The tasks set were designed to extend the teachers' deeper understanding and more detailed knowledge of specific areas of enquiry relevant to the professional development of those participating.

My thoughts whilst observing

The small group situation appeared to be crucial to the achievement of the aims. The teachers needed guidance, structure, and reassurance.

The external adviser's role was vital in establishing the stands required. It was considered that if the teacher feels inadequate to the tasks, the comments should be structured appropriately. It would also be worthwhile having individual sessions with the teachers at times to explore aspects in depth.

The skills component was obviously a very important part of the day, and the need for teachers to develop an analytical approach and a critical edge to their appraisal was clearly outlined. Although skills are essential, contents is also part of the training process.

Only in a suitable classroom atmosphere, i.e. a relaxed one, full of understanding and tolerance, will children not be afraid to ask questions even the most fantastic ones and to ask questions about everything they are interested in. In such an atmosphere of acceptance and understanding will they be not afraid of bei8ng reprimanded or mocked in front of the class – quite a problem for this school.

The external adviser modelled how questions can be managed and developed by a teacher and encouraged them to imitate her.

The debate on the differences between didactic methods and interactive teaching methods which took place after lunch was an important part of the training. They discussed the relative importance between what they teach (curriculum) and how they teach (teaching methodologies). External adviser brought in emotional intelligence, brain research learning and the knowledge user. This was then linked back to the issues of learners (children and teachers) asking questions and its importance within the learning process.

The day ended when each of the teachers had devised a set of targets or objectives for improvement of teaching methodologies in their own room. Agreed with adviser when she would next visit and observe them in the classroom.

Teachers then added to their professional development portfolios.

Key issue for the three teachers and focus of their discussion:

The ability to ask questions during the process of learning is also a teaching technique not only a means for estimation and evaluation of teaching work. Questions are in every process of acquisition and creativity. By doing this children practice pedantry and preciseness in work with the text or the learning content. The tendency to analyse and understand the content appears not only memorisation – especially when coming across difficult and more complex tasks, the tendency to structure the content and pint out the most important things, ideas and generalisation also appears. In such an active relationship children continuously connect, analyse and apply what was learned with what is being learned. Permanently asking questions during the process of learning, thinking processes and methods and techniques of successful learning also improve.

<u>My reflections later</u>

The training workshop enabled the three teachers to explore how to help children to participate more in their own learning. The external adviser used research evidence about learning approaches, methods and styles, touched on teaching relationships and demonstrated interactive methodology.

She created a warm and supportive atmosphere which ensured that the three teachers interacted and felt confident in expressing their own views, anxieties and doubts. This was effective professional development with highly differentiated strategies to meet the individual needs of each teacher. She generated feelings of enjoyment, excitement, involvement and self confidence. The methods enabled the teachers to participate in their own learning, to be involved in discovering information and finding solutions to real classroom problems. Plus they co-operated and helped each other.

<u>Next visit:</u>

Visit these three classrooms and talk with the teachers about the implementation of the objectives agreed, ask about impact on them and the children.

Example 3: School 1

November 2, 2000. 10.15 – 12.15

This is the fourth observation of this teacher in three months.

Objective of observation: teacher is trying to develop/ improve the way she asks questions of children, the quality of answers that she receives from them and the feedback that she gives to their responses. This objective had been agreed with the external adviser.

This is an English writing lesson. Text used: Gulliver's Travels. Looking at how to use tenses to build atmosphere. Lesson begins with whole class session, shared reading of the text, the teacher's questions with responses from children and feedback.

Also considering audience.

Observation schedules used (attached);

- observation record;
- observation evaluation;
- teacher's questions and pupil responses.

Reflections on the classroom observation of year 6 children

Effective teaching means engineering opportunities for children to write in a range and variety of contexts. It also means switching roles in order to respond in kind to the kinds of writing being undertaken in the classroom – this was observed happening.

The feedback that the teacher gave to the children, helped to structure and shape the learning in that lesson (and possible future learning?). Also her demonstration of writing provided an insight for the children into how writing is composed, transcribed and reviewed.

There was a focus on 'within sentence' features – consistent agreement of tenses. Strategies used:

Reference:

- Using pronouns to avoid repetition of the same noun;
- Using pro-forms to avoid repetition of the same noun/pronoun sequence;
- Maintaining agreement between nouns and pronouns;
- Avoiding ambiguity, especially in the use of the pronouns.

Substitution:

- Nominal substitution
- Casual substitution
- Verbal substitution.

Ellipsis

- Explained how can be used to add interest to writing, even adding a little tension.

Made links to the next lesson on sentence connectives.

The discussion on the text was successful and conveyed the meaning that she wanted to communicate. However, at times it lacked specificity and reliability - possibility that the children's writing may suffer. She could have used exemplar texts to illustrate the range of performance. – Talk about this with her on next visit??

Classroom Observation Record

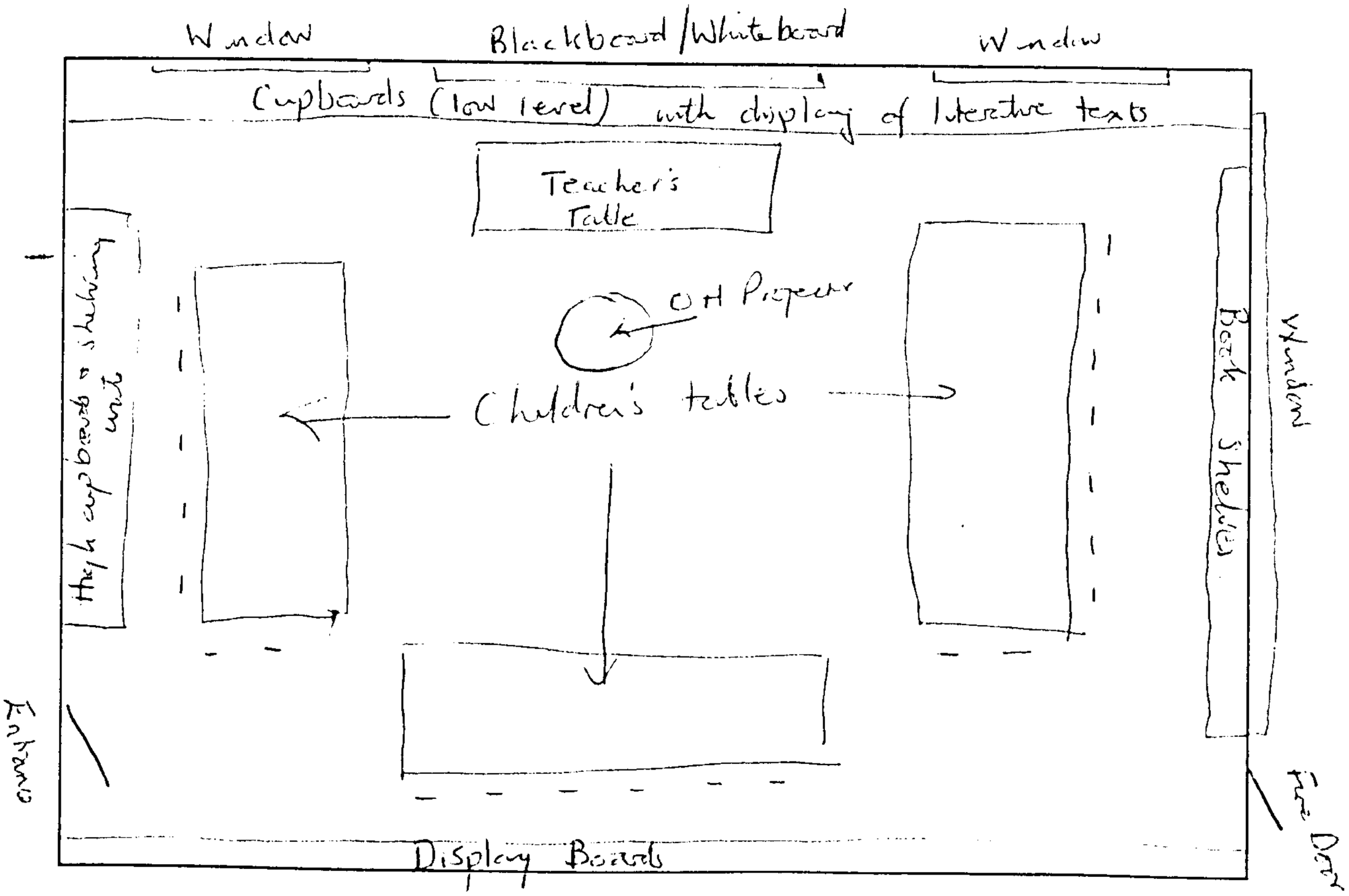
Teacher: YP (14) School: 1 Class: 6 YP

Observer: JW Date 2.11.00 Time: 10.15 - 12.15

Number of students: 21 High/low set?: NA

Lesson seen: (English/) mathematics/ science (4th observation of this teacher) See NTO in Oct/Sept.

Class Layout:



Descriptive Notes:

Room is very tidy + highly organised. Everything labelled + clearly set out.
Children enter room after the break, quietly + calmly. Lesson objective is on white board and materials / texts are set out on tables.
Lesson begins with whole class session on "Gulliver's Travels" text extract - looking at use of tense to build atmosphere. Followed by small group and individual activities. Plenary session to reinforce learning + closure.

Classroom Observation Evaluation

1 = behaviour rarely observed
2 = behaviour occasionally observed
3 = behaviour often observed
4 = behaviour frequently observed
5 = behaviour consistently observed

Classroom Management Techniques

1. Rules and consequences are clearly understood	1	2	3	4	(5)
2. The teacher starts a lesson on time	1	2	3	4	(5)
3. The teacher uses time during class transitions effectively	1	2	3	4	(5)
4. The teacher takes care that tasks/materials are ready, and papers and materials are collected and distributed effectively	1	2	3	4	(5)
5. There are limited disruptions in the class	(1)	2	3	4	5

Maintain Appropriate Classroom Behaviour

6. The teacher uses a reward system to manage student behaviour	1	2	(3)	4	5
7. The teacher corrects behaviour immediately	1	2	3	(4)	5
8. The teacher corrects behaviour constructively	1	2	3	(4)	5
9. The teacher monitors the entire class	1	2	3	(4)	5

Focus and Maintain Attention on Lesson

10. The teacher clearly states objectives/purposes of the lesson	1	2	3	4	(5)
11. The teacher checks for prior knowledge	1	2	(3)	4	5
12. The teacher presents material accurately	1	2	3	(4)	5
13. The teacher presents material clearly	1	2	3	(4)	5
14. The teacher gives detailed directions and explanations	1	2	3	(4)	5
15. The teacher emphasises key points of the lesson	1	2	3	4	(5)
16. The teacher uses a brisk pace	1	2	3	(4)	5

Provides Students with Review and Practice

17. The teacher clearly explains tasks	1	2	3	4	**5**
18. The teacher offers effective assistance to individuals/groups	1	2	3	**4**	5
19. The teacher checks for understanding	1	2	3	4	**5**
20. The teacher or students summarise the lesson	1	2	3	4	**5**
21. The teacher reteaches if error rate is high	1	2	3	**4**	5
22. The teacher is approachable for students with problems	1	2	3	4	**5**

Demonstrates Skills in Questioning

23. The teacher uses a high frequency of questions	1	2	3	**4**	5
24. The teacher asks academic questions	1	2	**3**	4	5
25. The teacher asks open-ended questions	1	2	3	**4**	5
26. The teacher probes further when responses are incorrect	1	2	3	**4**	5
27. The teacher elaborates on answers	1	2	3	**4**	5
28. The teacher asks students to explain how they reached their solution	1	2	3	**4**	5
29. Students are asked for more than one solution	1	2	**3**	4	5
30. The teacher uses appropriate wait time between questions and responses	1	2	3	**4**	5
31. The teacher notes students' mistakes	1	2	3	**4**	5
32. The teacher guides students through errors	1	2	3	**4**	5
33. The teacher clears up misconceptions	1	2	3	**4**	5
34. The teacher gives immediate academic feedback	1	2	**3**	4	5
35. The teacher gives accurate academic feedback	1	2	**3**	4	5
36. The teacher gives positive academic feedback	1	2	**3**	4	5
37. The teacher encourages student questions	1	2	3	**4**	5
38. The teacher uses realistic problems and examples	1	2	3	**4**	5
39. The teacher encourages/teaches students to use a variety of problem-solving strategies	1	2	3	**4**	5
40. The teacher uses correct subject language	1	2	3	4	**5**

41. The teacher encourages students to use correct subject language	1	2	3	4	5
42. The teacher encourages students to use their own problem-solving strategies	1	2	3	4	5
43. The teacher connects new material to previously learnt material	1	2	3	4	5
Demonstrates A Variety of Teaching Methods					
44. The teacher uses a variety of explanations that differ in complexity	1	2	3	4	5
45. The teacher uses a variety of instructional methods (i.e. blending whole class teaching with group and paired work)	1	2	3	4	5
46. Teacher uses a mixture of questions and statements	1	2	3	4	5
47. The teacher uses a range of instructional aids/ resources	1	2	3	4	5
Establishes a Positive Classroom Climate					
48. The teacher communicates high expectations for students	1	2	3	4	5
49. The teacher exhibits personal enthusiasm	1	2	3	4	5
50. The teacher displays a positive tone	1	2	3	4	5
51. The teacher encourages student interaction and communication	1	2	3	4	5
52. The teacher conveys genuine concern for students (empathetic, understanding, warm, friendly)	1	2	3	4	5
53. The teacher knows and uses student names	1	2	3	4	5
54. The teacher displays students' work in the classroom (current work attractively displayed)	1	2	3	4	5
55. The teacher prepares an inviting and cheering classroom	1	2	3	4	5

OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Symbol Label:

Teacher Questions

O = Open question C = Closed question	The question calls for explanation by the student The question calls for a single response

Responder	Definition
M: Male	The student answering the question is male
F: Female	The student answering the question is female
CR: Choral response	The whole class, or group of students within class, respond together

Student Response

+ Right	The teacher accepts the student's response as correct or satisfactory
± Part right	The teacher considers the student's to be only partially correct or to be correct but incomplete
- Wrong	The teacher considers the student's response to be incorrect
0 no answer	The student makes no repsonse or says he doesn't know (code student's answer here if teacher gives feedback reaction before s/he is able to respond
St. Dem	Student demonstrates answer to question
St. Quest	Student asks curriculum question

Teacher Feedback Reaction

++ Praise	Teacher praises student either in words ("fine", "good", "wonderful", "good thinking') or by expressing verbal affirmation in a notably warm, joyous or excited manner
+ Affirm	Teacher simply affirms that the student's response is correct (nods, repeats answer, says "Yes", "OK", etc.)
0 No reaction	Teacher makes no response whatever to student's response - s/he goes on to something else
- Negate	Teacher simply indicates that the student's response is incorrect (shakes head, says "No", "That's not right", "Hm-mm", etc.)
- - Criticise	Teacher criticises student, either in words ("You should know better than that', "That doesn't make any sense - you better pay close attention' etc.) or by expressing verbal negation in a frustrated, angry or disgusted manner
Gives Ans: Teacher gives answer	Teacher provides the correct answer for the student
Ask Other: Teacher asks another student	Teacher redirects the question, asking a different student to try to answer it
Other Calls: Another student calls out answer	Another student calls out the correct answer and the teacher achnowledges that it is correct.
Rpts: Repeats question	Teacher repeats the original question, either in its entirety or with a prompt ("Well?", "Do you know?", "What's the answer?')
Clue: Rephrase or clue	Teacher makes original question easier for student to answer by rephrasing it or by giving a clue
SF = statement of facts OS = open ended statement	Offering facts Offering explanations of ideas/problems/thoughts

Whole class session - 17 minutes

Teacher Question-Answer-Feedback Response Form

Each Quest	Pupil Response								Teacher Feedback Reaction									
	M	F	+	±	-	0	P. Dem	P. Quest	++	+	0	-	- -	Gives Ans	Ask Other	Other calls	Rpts	Clue
1) O		✓	✓						✓									
2) O	✓		✓							✓								
3) C	✓			✓					✓						✓	✓		✓
4) O		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓					✓				
5) O		✓	✓						✓									
6) C	✓			✓						✓					✓		✓	
7) C	✓			✓					✓									
8) O		✓	✓							✓								
9) O		✓	✓						✓									
10) O					✓					✓					✓			✓
11) C	✓			✓			✓		✓									
12) C	✓		✓					✓	✓					✓				
13) O								✓						✓				
14) C		✓	✓				✓		✓									

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APPENDIX 9

Time plan for field work

Appendix 9: Time frame for the research

Date	Activities	Focus/days	Schools
September - October 1998	Commence PhD – reading and deciding on initial research design		
November 1998 – April, 1999	Exploratory Study & reading	28 days	8 schools plus specialist interviews and surveys 12 interviews
May 1999	Selecting schools and gaining access		
June 1999	Reach agreement with schools and ethical code		4 schools
July – August 1999	Research design & reading		
September – December 1999	Survey of governors, parents and pupils in four schools & reading	Initial part of case studies	4 schools (1 to 4)
February – April 2000	Observation and interviews in schools 1 & 2	Case study 1 &2 30 days	2 schools (1 & 2) 34 interviews
April – May 2000	Observation and interviews in schools 3 & 4	Case study 3 & 4 30 days	2 schools (3 & 4) 37 interviews
April – July 2000	Observation and interviews in schools 1 & 2	Case study 1 & 2 28 days	2 schools (1 & 2) 34 interviews
September – December 2000	Observation and interviews in schools 3 & 4	Case study 3 & 4 28 days	2 schools (3 & 4) 37 interviews
September – December 2000	Observation and interviews in schools 1 & 2	Case study 1 & 2 28 days	2 schools (1 & 2) 34 interviews
January – March 2001	Observation and interviews in schools 3 & 4	Case study 3 & 4 28 days	2 schools (3 & 4) 37 interviews
May – June 2001	Observation and interviews in schools X and Y	Case study 5 10 days	2 school (X & Y) 2 interviews
July 2001 – March 2002	Analysis & reading		
March 2002 – March 2003	Writing. & reading		
March 2003 -	Re-writing of thesis		
		182 days in schools	227 interviews

Time Frame	Exploratory Study	School 1 Post holder & M E R	School 2 Post holders & M E R	Timeframe	School 3 Target setting	School 4 Target setting
1998 Nov: 1999 Jan: 1999 Feb: 1999 March: 1999 May 1999 June: 1999 Sept to Dec: **Total of 28 days**	Specialist interviews (3); IAPS survey; Specialist interview (1); Interviewing 8 headteachers (4 from state/4 from Prep). Selecting schools; Ethical code; Survey of governors, pupils & parents; Audit of documentation .					

Spring Term 2000 28.02: 29.02 – 4.03 06.03 02.03: 07.03- 12.03 06.04: 07.04:	**15 days in each school.**	**Case Study 1** Attend INSET/Interview HT; Interview 16 teachers; Observation in school.	**Case Study 2** Interview HT; Interview 16 teachers; Observation; Observe INSET.			
Summer Term 2000 04.05: 16 – 17 .05: 22 – 25 05: 16.06: 03 – 04.07: 05.05: 18 – 20.05: 25 – 26.05: 30.06: 05 – 06 .07:	**14 days in each school**	**Case Study 1** Monitor planned change & attend staff meeting; Monitor planned change & attend subject leader meetings; Monitor planned change & interview 16 teachers; Monitor planned change & interview subject leaders; Monitor & interview HT.	**Case Study 2** Monitor planned change & attend staff meeting; Monitor planned change & attend subject leaders meeting; Monitor planned change & interview 15 teachers; Monitor planned change & interview subject leaders; Monitor & interview HT.	**Summer Term 2000** 25 – 26.04: 02 – 06.05: 12.06: 27 – 28 .04: 08 –11.05: 13.06: **15 days in each school.**	**Cast Study 3** Attend INSET & interview HT; Interview 16 teachers; Observation.	**Case Study 4** Attend INSET & interview HT; Interview 19 teachers; Observation.

Time Frame		School 1	School 2	Time Frame	School 3	School 4
Autumn Term 2000 & Spring term 2001 01.09: 06 – 10.11: 04.09: 13 – 17.11:	**14 days in each school**	**Case Study 1** Attend staff meeting; Observe school & interview Ht & teachers.	**Case Study 2** Attend staff meeting; Observe school & interview HT & teachers.	**Autumn Term 2000** 05 – 08.09: 02 – 04.10: 20 – 21.11: 11 – 14.09: 09 – 11.10: 22 – 23.11: **Total of 14 days in each school.**	**Case Study 3** Monitor change & attend staff & team meetings; Monitor change & observe classrooms; Monitor change & interview HT & teachers.	**Case Study 4** Monitor change & attend staff & team meetings; Monitor change & observe classrooms; Monitor change & interview HT & teachers.
				Spring Term 2001 08.01: 05 – 09.03: 10.01: 12 – 16.03:	**Case Study 3** Attend staff meeting; Observe & interview HT & teachers.	**Case Study 4** Attend staff meeting; Observe & Interview HT & teachers.
Summer Term 2001		**Case study 5**	5 days in school X	**Case study 5**	5 days in school Y	
Total days in each school **Total days**		43 days **182 days**	48 days		48 days	43 days